UNCLE REMUS *and* HIS FRIENDS

Joel Chandler Harris

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Joel Chandler Harris

UNCLE REMUS AND HIS FRIENDS

BY

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
MYRTA LOCKETT AVARY

AND WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM
PHOTOGRAPHS

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1914

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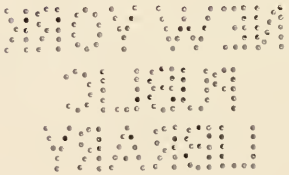

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INTRODUCTION TO THE VISITORS' EDITION

I

UNCLE REMUS

Joel Chandler Harris was born December 9, 1848, in the quiet little village of Eatonton, Putnam County, Georgia. His father died in his infancy. His mother was young and very poor. She did the best she could for her little boy, rearing him carefully, and sending him to the Eatonton day school. That was before the public school era, and schools were pay institutions.

Joe was a red-haired, freckle-faced little boy, sturdy, active, fond of play, but marked by that shyness and reserve which he carried through life. "He was probably the least noticed boy in the neighborhood," says a friend who knew. "He was such a clever little fellow!" reports another who chose him for playmate. He developed early liking for literature, listening intently to the *Vicar of Wakefield*, which his mother read to him when

he was six. That book inspired him with a desire to write.

He was fond of animals. "His mother told me," relates his wife, "how he befriended stray cats and dogs. He kept that up. I have been often perplexed to know what to do with our excess of kittens. He was always finding another puppy and bringing it home. Our children were allowed to keep any pets they pleased. They had a pony, donkey, chickens, pigeons, rabbits, cows, calves — almost everything! His mother said Joel always had a wonderful way with horses. Old Uncle Bob Capers, the negro stage-coach driver at Eatonton, used to let Joel sit on the box with him. Once, she saw Joel sitting alone on top of the stage, driving the horses himself — such a little fellow! and she was nearly frightened to death!"

The Civil War came, making times harder for every one and no easier for this struggling mother and her child. Of the period when he became fourteen he once gave this account in casual talk: —

"There came a time when I had to be up and doing. I was in the post-office, reading the newspapers, when the first number of the

Countryman was laid on the counter. I saw in it this advertisement: 'An active, intelligent boy, fourteen or fifteen years of age, is wanted at this office to learn the printing business. March 4th, 1862.'

"This was my opportunity and I seized it with both hands. I wrote to the editor, whom I knew, and the next time he came to town, he sought me out, asked if I had written the letter with my own hands, and in three words the bargain was concluded.

"The *Countryman* was published nine miles from any post-office, on the plantation of Mr. Joseph A. Turner. On the roof of the printing-office, squirrels scampered and blue jays chattered. I used to sit in the dusk and see the shadows of all the great problems of life flitting about, restless and uneasy, and I had time to think about them. What some people call loneliness was to me a great blessing; and the printer's trade, so far as I learned it, was in the nature of a liberal education. Mr. Turner had a large private library, especially rich in English literature, in translations from the Greek and Latin, and works on ornithology. It would have been remarkable if, with nothing to do but set a column or so

of type daily, I had failed to take advantage of this library. Mr. Turner took an abiding interest in my welfare, directed my reading, gave me good advice, and the benefit of his wisdom and experience at every turn. For the rest, I got along as any boy would. I was fond of setting type, and when my task was done I used to go to the negro cabins and hear their songs and stories."

One of these cabins was that of "Old Uncle George Terrell," who made ginger-cakes and persimmon beer, and told quaint stories to little Joe and the Turner children clustered around his cabin fire. "Uncle Remus" of Mr. Harris's books and world-wide fame is a composite of "Uncle George Terrell," "Uncle Bob Capers," and other kindly black "uncles."

If the master of Turnwold had a wonderful library and the little boy was welcome there, the mistress had a wonderful garden where he was welcome, too. In it was a plot where only wild flowers grew, and Mrs. Turner knew as much about wild flowers as her husband knew about birds. The *Countryman* was a scholarly little sheet, resembling Addison's *Spectator*, Goldsmith's *Bee*, and Johnson's *Rambler*. Mr. Turner welcomed contributions in prose

and verse from his young printer, and predicted a bright future for him. At the close of the war the paper ceased publication.

Harris, adrift at the age of sixteen, found work successively at Macon, Georgia, as typesetter and writer on the *Telegraph;* New Orleans, Louisiana, as editor's assistant on the *Crescent;* Forsyth, Georgia, as typesetter, writer, editor, and wrapper-up and mailer of the *Advertiser,* owned by Mr. James Harrison; at Savannah, as associate editor on the *News* with W. T. Thompson, author of *Major Jones's Courtship.* At Forsyth he was a member of the Harrison home circle; Mrs. Starke, Mr. Harrison's sister, exhibited a kindly interest in him. He left Savannah for Atlanta in 1876 with his wife and two children.

He had married Essie La Rose, a young lady of French ancestry and Canadian birth, a sea-captain's daughter, in Savannah, April 21, 1873. Of her surname he was fond of saying: "'T was a pity to change it — but I just had to!" and proving by Shakespeare that a rose by another name was just as sweet! It is said of him that he never liked to be out of sound of his wife's voice. Her congenial and sympathetic companionship and his apprecia-

tion of it contributed much to his success. *Evening Tales*, a translation of Ortoli's folk-lore tales, was their joint production, her familiarity with French assisting him greatly.

In Atlanta, as an editor of the *Constitution*, he was a member of that charmed circle which included Evan P. Howell, N. P. T. Finch, Henry W. Grady, Wallace P. Reed, Sam Small, and Frank L. Stanton. An interruption came to Small's "Old Si" stories, which were making a hit. Howell said: "Joe, why don't you try your hand at this sort of thing?" and the *Constitution* printed the first of the "Uncle Remus" tales. Their popularity was instant. Northern publishers began to call for Mr. Harris's stories — greatly to his surprise. He always seemed inclined to take his fame as a joke — a sort of humorous accident. He was very seriously industrious, however. His wife thinks "Free Joe" was his favorite among his stories.

Mr. Harris's home, paid for with his pen, was the first fruits of his literary success, the *Constitution* enabling him to take earlier possession by arranging easy terms of payment for him. His daughters, Lillian and Mildred (Mrs. Fritz Wagner and Mrs. Edwin Camp),

and Joel Chandler, Jr., were born here. He brought three little sons with him — Julian, Lucien, and Evelyn. He lost three children. Of his home Rev. Dr. Lee, his friend for years, has said: "You could never enter his door without a sense of a subtle, genial presence resting on everything about the house. Every child he had did seemingly as he pleased, but grew up to express in orderly conduct and attention to duty the sweet music of his father's house."

It must have been a proud day for him, whose early life had been such a struggle with untoward conditions, when he here installed his wife, his mother, and his family of young children. It was never a pretentious dwelling, but always roomy, sunshiny, and comfortable; it wore the air of being the abode of a man who loved home, wife, mother, and children; who loved trees, flowers, and birds; and who was a good neighbor. The children of the vicinity knew the taste of the apples that fell from the old apple trees in his garden, and of the persimmons that were to be found among the rustling leaves inside of his fence when autumn winds shook them from their boughs; and everybody knew the color and smell of

his flowers. Neighbors received "messes" of vegetables from "Snap Bean Farm," as he humorously called the lot overlooked by his veranda, where honeysuckle vines and other things besides edibles grew and domestic animals found pasturage. In his magazine he wrote as "The Farmer of Snap Bean Farm" and "Mr. Billy Sanders of Shady Dale."

The Sign of the Wren's Nest, gradually abbreviated to its present name, acquired this title years ago, when a pair of wrens built a nest in the mail-box at the gate, and Mr. Harris protected them in their occupation, saying to human protest: "Make other arrangements for mail. We must not break up a home." When Mr. Harris built his house here, this part of Atlanta was in the woods. Of a sapling beside his door, he said to his wife when he forbade its being cut down: "This tree shall be my monument." That sapling, now a lordly tree, shades the entrance.

I recall my first visit to this home. The happy wife and children, the venerable mother, and even the household pets reflected in their air of peace and content the spirit of the master. In the hall, an unobtrusive stair ran up. "Where to?" I asked. "Mr. Harris's study

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among the tree-tops — at least, he built it for that," his wife said. "But he does n't do much writing up there!" interpolated his son Julian, then a lad, with twinkling eyes. "He can't stay away from us!" "But does n't your laughter and talking disturb him?" "He likes it! He writes most of his stories with us around him. He reads them to us and asks us what we think of them."

The engaging manner in which Julian "gave away" his sire in small bits of information was delicious exposure of Mr. Harris's comradeship with his children. "Come!" said he, with the genuine Harris friendliness, "and I will show you the Mockingbird Tree." And he pointed out the lofty poplar where warbled the songster that inspired Mr. Harris's prose idyl. That yard and garden, and the trees and vines! One could easily imagine Uncle Remus here, and Brer Rabbit hopping confidentially from leafy covert to hold confab with him — and hopping back hastily if a stranger hove in sight.

Whimsically wise was Uncle Remus about his wild things. One day, when in the *Constitution* building, I wanted to peep in on Uncle Remus. But on what errand of importance?

I crept into his den, where he sat busy at his desk, papers all around. "Uncle Remus," I said, "I want to ask you something about Brer Rabbit." I had his ear — and his twinkling eyes. "Mr. Harris, you know rabbits can't climb. Now, you say in your story, Brer Rabbit 'clomb a tree.' How could he?" "He was bleedzed to!" chuckled Uncle Remus. By like unanswerable reply, he is said to have stopped the mouth of grave naturalists calling on him for explanation of the prowess of his wild creatures, and to have demolished President Roosevelt in the "nature-faking" controversy at the White House. "The Blue Jay," "The Mockingbird," "The Self-Educated Dog," and other essays of their class reveal him, however, as a serious and accurate observer of animal life. "The scientists are a very unhappy lot; they deny everything, they doubt everything," he remarked during the "nature-faking" controversy. "A creature hunted and a creature at play are not the same, though each may be identical with the other. A hunter must have blood, and a naturalist must have specimens, whereas an observer needs only his patience and sharp eyes."

His friendships were deep and lasting. He never forgot the Turners and others who were kind to him in his early years. After Evan Howell's death, when inviting Clark Howell, then candidate for Governor of Georgia, to hold a campaign rally on the lawn at the Wren's Nest, he wrote: "I have lived here thirty years in concealment, and if I do not make myself conspicuous at this meeting of your friends, it will be because I have never made myself conspicuous anywhere. You never really knew the relations existing between your father and myself. They were something finer than the things poets write about. We were together for nearly thirty years and there was never a ripple in the strong stream of our confidence and faith in each other."

The Wren's Nest is truly classic ground. James Whitcomb Riley was its guest for weeks. Joaquin Miller, Dr. Lyman Abbott, members of the Gilder family, Walter H. Page, A. B. Frost, Richard Malcolm Johnston, and many other famous folk of our own land and some from over seas have visited it. The master received with the grace of the warm heart all who came in simplicity, seeking him simply, be the visitor great or lowly. When sought as

a celebrity, he hardly knew how to meet the situation, and escaped if he could. It was impossible to lionize him. Once when he and Henry Grady were in New York, Grady engaged to have him at a banquet in his honor. He slipped out of his hotel and fled to Atlanta. Mrs. Harris gives the sequel: "Before I expected his return, I saw a man that looked like him on a street-car crossing one on which I was going downtown. 'If I didn't know he was in New York,' I said to myself, 'I would be sure that was he.' At the *Constitution* I asked Mr. Finch, managing editor, when he had last heard from Mr. Harris. 'Why, don't you know he is in town? Haven't you seen him? He came by here and then went home,' said Mr. Finch. Home I went. Mr. Harris was walking contentedly about the lawn. 'Joel,' I exclaimed, 'why are you back so soon?' 'Ain't you glad to see me?' he asked. I reassured him on that point! 'I got so homesick,' he explained, 'I couldn't stand New York any longer. I just had to come home as quick as I could get here!' Opportunities for European tours offered. 'No!' said he. 'Europe's too far from home. Georgia's good enough for me!'"

In Eatonton they once thought they had him cornered for a speech. He was on the platform with Grady, and when his turn came they called: "Harris! Harris!" "I'm coming," he answered, and walked down among them. With some such remark as, "I have never been able to make a speech without taking a drink of water; so you must excuse me till I go and get a little water," he escaped while they laughed and cheered. That remark — to his old neighbors at Eatonton — was his one public speech.

Loving children and at ease with them as they were with him, he was unable to encounter even them in any ceremonious way. His fifty-eighth birthday was to be celebrated in Children's Room, Carnegie Library, and he was asked to address the children. The hour arrived, and with it this note from Uncle Remus to Miss Anne Wallace, Librarian: —

"I do not know how I can ever convey to you my gratitude for making my poor birthday an occasion for celebration by the children of Atlanta. No higher tribute could be paid than this; and I am far from being sure that I deserve it. Yet what a great thing it would be if, after all, I did deserve it!

"I should like to be there — but how can I face the children — their beauty, their sweetness, their innocence — how can I appear before these little ones without bursting into tears of gratitude? How could I, knowing what they are there for, behold them without making great display of what Brer Rabbit would call his big boo-hoo? I depend upon your woman's heart — which never fails to know — to sympathize with what I mean — and what I feel.

"Your faithful and affectionate friend,

"JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS."

That note might be read as a part of the ceremonial in every celebration of his birthday. Its spirit of reverence for woman and childhood — a spirit that marked him always — makes eternal appeal for our reverent memory of him and all that concerned him. It is fitting that to a band of women should be entrusted the charge of keeping his memory green by preserving his home as a shrine.

His charities — he would never have called them that! — were performed in a manner that was all his own. When his wife left home, she never knew what property might

be missing — or added — on her return. She relates: "I was overlooking his wardrobe for a coat I had put away. 'Joel,' I asked, 'what did you do with that coat?' He replied, 'An old man came here one day, asking if there was an old coat I could give him. Why, yes, I told him. Here's one I've been keeping for you. He seemed surprised.'"

Disturbed by a peddler offering soap, he said he needed none. "But I am on the verge of starvation," pleaded the peddler. "Why, man," laughed Harris, "your clothes look better than mine!" "If you knew how my poor wife brushed and smoothed them —" Harris studied him anew, noting that his garments were old and their wearer of genteel bearing. "I answered hastily," he said. "I need soap. Here is a five-dollar bill. I'll take it all in soap." The peddler left his entire stock.

He was observing his ramie plant one day when an Oriental woman, bearing a bundle, timidly entered "the gate that is never closed," as he described the entrance to his grounds. She came bowing and smiling. Would the so nice gentleman buy some shawl or some of the most beautiful lace for his lady? And if

not so, would he graciously allow one who was prostrate at his feet, to look at the — oh, so pretty tree? Receiving a cordial invitation, she fixed her eyes, all her homesick soul in them, on the ramie plant, like herself a wanderer from her native land; and forgot her bundle; but he did not, and his lady acquired more shawl and lace than she knew what to do with.

Street-railway employees on the line running past his house found him a friend. In horse-car days he often relieved the driver while the latter went inside the car to warm himself or to eat his lunch. His interest in his fellow craftsmen was unfailing, and he never forgot that printers were of this class. The resolutions passed on his death by the Atlanta Typographical Union were perhaps its first tribute of the kind to any one. He helped many struggling writers. Need, where organized charity does not look, he relieved with touch too delicate to wound. The following instances are characteristic: —

"Our young friend X," he wrote his absent son, "is here on a visit. I found him on the street, down and out, and brought him home with me — what I would have some one

do for you, were you to happen on such hard luck." X is a man of mark to-day — and not the only one who, in the hour of youthful struggle, met the genial grasp of Uncle Remus's hand and sat down at his board. A gentleman he knew became partially paralyzed, and his family suffered. Mr. Harris, seeking work this man could do, consulted a mutual friend about obtaining for him the postmastership of a new sub-station. The friend exclaimed, "No chance for him against applicants with strong pulls." "Strong pulls!" retorted Harris. "You forget he is a paralytic!" "What's that got to do with getting him a government position?" "Everything! Amos Fox, our postmaster, and Senator Colquitt have both been paralyzed." He saw Fox and wrote to Colquitt. The paralytic got the job.

His dealings with a number of humble pensioners of both races was a composition of humor and pathos. There were some old men on the retired lists of labor who looked to him for stipends as war veterans look to the Government. A specially pathetic instance was that of a Frenchman, a landscape gardener, a little old man who went blind; his daughter

came to the Wren's Nest every week for her father's allowance. To negroes he was ever kind.

He did not try to build up a large estate, although with fame came profits. His wife relates: "He used to say, 'Let 's enjoy things as we go along, and while we are all together. I just want to leave enough when I die to take care of you and the girls. The boys can take care of themselves.' He was generous in his home, although he discouraged extravagance and advocated simple living by precept and example. He kept a cabinet of small change which was open to the household at their convenience. While indulgent to his children, he was firm. 'This is thusly,' he would say, laying down the law. He kept up his country habits, rising and retiring early. He liked to go out in the morning and trim rosebushes and cut flowers; would bring in great baskets of roses. He liked to look after his raspberry and strawberry vines and his collard patch."

Who that is familiar with his essays as "The Farmer" will not recall the way in which he served "cornpone and collards" to his readers? There is the little story that his

young friend Don Marquis told of him. Don, going to see him one morning, was greeted: "I want to show you a poem of mine!" Don expected a manuscript. Uncle Remus took him out in the yard and exhibited a wistaria vine in full bloom!

"He liked old things, old-fashioned things," says his wife. "He did not like new furniture, new carpets; said he did n't like the new smell and was glad when the new wore off; he liked things that had served us; wanted things to stay put. Once, soon after we began housekeeping, when I had been housecleaning and moving furniture around, he came in and exclaimed: 'Why, Essie, you 've been changing things around. How is a man to know if he is in his own house or some other man's if you change things around so?'"

His last Christmas editorial, "Christmas and the Fairies," reads like a tender valedictory to all the world. It concludes: "The Farmer wishes for old and young the merriest Christmas and the happiest New Year the world has ever seen. He hopes the materialist may never be able to destroy in the minds of the children the budding faith in things unseen,

the kindling belief in things beyond their knowledge; he hopes that Santa Claus will come to them while they sleep, and that real Fairies will dance in their innocent dreams."

An editorial on "The Matter of Belief" (written long before, but appearing in strange coincidence with his death) reflects his own simple faith: "We must become as little children"; we must be brotherly; and "The Farmer knows that He who created life, which is the greatest mystery of all, is fully equal to the production of all other mysteries and miracles." "His faith in Providence was always very strong," says his wife. "Whenever we were in trouble, he would say, 'God will take care of us.' He was always sure of that." He was not a member of the church visible until shortly before his death when he was received into the Catholic communion, that of his wife; but he was always deeply religious. When he was a little boy, his mother took him to his grandmother's funeral. In a letter, written when a young man, he describes the impression made upon him by the words of the service: "I am the Resurrection and the Life"; they rang in his ears continually; he wrote them in his copy-book; they

abided with him as the strongest in his soul's experience.

He was only sixty when death touched him — before the years could bend him or the sunshine of his days could dim. "Humor is a great thing to live by," he once wrote, "and, other things being equal, it is a profitable thing to die by." He met death sweetly, resolutely, genially, knowing for several days that the end was near. The old playful, whimsical manner of his intercourse with his family was preserved until he sank into unconsciousness. To his son's greeting one morning, "How are you, Father?" he replied, his eyes striving for their merry twinkle, "I am about the extent of a tenth of a gnat's eyebrow better." Once Julian said, "Father, your time has not yet come to be no more." He answered: "Rather, when a man dies, instead of saying, 'He is no more,' say, 'He is forever!'" In his own quaint words, he went in childlike faith, "to see what is on the other side," passing away July 3, 1908, at 7.58 in the evening.

Sunday, July 4, he was borne from his home to St. Anthony's Church near by, and after the last rites, simple as he would have had

them, were performed by Father Jackson, he was laid to rest in Westview Cemetery. Rev. Dr. J. W. Lee preached a memorial sermon in Trinity M. E. Church. Protestant and Catholic thus united to do him honor. His grave is marked by a granite boulder, on which these words selected from his writings by Julian are inscribed as his epitaph: —

"I seem to see before me the smiling faces of thousands of children — some young and fresh and some wearing the friendly marks of age, but all children at heart — and not an unfriendly face among them. And while I am trying hard to speak the right word, I seem to hear a voice lifted above the rest, saying: 'You have made some of us happy.' And so I feel my heart fluttering and my lips trembling, and I have to bow silently, and turn away and hurry into the obscurity that fits me best."

Never into obscurity, O sweet, brave soul! The sun shines — and it shines for us all — wherever you are!

This sketch deals with his home life rather than with his work as a man of letters. The world has been and will be reminded in many

other ways of his position in literature, which must strengthen with the years. He ranks with its finest and sweetest humorists, and as one of its greatest masters of folklore, a science which has come to be recognized as such only within a century.

He is grouped with St. Francis of Assisi, who preached sermons to birds; with Hans Christian Andersen, the Grimm brothers, and others of their cult who, in preserving the world's folklore, have preserved its prehistoric literature. In negro dialect he has no equal. The service which he performed could not now be rendered by any other, for the old negro and the plantation life of the old South have passed away. His popularity is extensive. An American tourist in Egypt saw, on a boat on the Nile, a group of children around a story-teller's knee, listening to *Nights with Uncle Remus* told in a foreign tongue. A traveler in Australia reported that the "Uncle Remus" classics greeted him in bookshops wherever he turned. In Anglicized Africa, the negro's native habitat, they are much read. Several Georgians dining in London with a nobleman made casual reference to Atlanta. "Oh," exclaimed a chorus, "that's where

Uncle Remus lives!" In the University of Berlin, a lecturer on American literature pronounced *Uncle Remus, His Songs and Sayings* the "most important individual contribution to American literature since 1870." As an estimate, sincere and rounded, we give this, written by one of his associates at the time of his death: —

"He was the articulate voice of the wonderful folklore of that humbler race whose every mood and tense he knew with complete comprehensiveness. His shrewd, kindly, and humorous delineation of the negro, and the reasoning life he has given the simple animals of the fields and forests, make him known wherever people read and think. His mission was — and is — broader. For his folklore and his novels, his short stories and his poems, breathe consistently a distinguishing philanthropy. It is the creed of optimism, of mutual trust and tolerance for all things living, of common sense and of idealism that is worth while because it fits the unvarnished duty of every hour."

MYRTA LOCKETT AVARY.

FRONT STEPS OF WREN'S NEST—SHOWING
MR. HARRIS'S CHAIR

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II

THE WREN'S NEST

At a meeting called by the Mayor of Atlanta and held in the City Council Chamber, July 10, 1908, a week after the death of Joel Chandler Harris, the Uncle Remus Memorial Association was organized to undertake the erection of a fitting monument to him. After discussion of several plans it was decided to purchase Mr. Harris's house, the Wren's Nest, in the outskirts of Atlanta, and equip it as a permanent memorial. A Ladies' Auxiliary was formed, which succeeded to the title and task of the original organization, a body of gentlemen who now became an advisory board. The Association thus constituted, with Mrs. Arthur McDermott Wilson as president, succeeded in raising the sum needed to accomplish its purpose. The money came in many ways and from many sources, — nearly $5000 from a lecture by Theodore Roosevelt in 1910, the same amount from Andrew Carnegie, who duplicated the proceeds of the lecture, a contribution of $5000 from the Harris family, etc., etc. Meanwhile Mr. Harris's memory was

honored in other ways. "Uncle Remus Day" was instituted in 1910, the schools of Atlanta observing the author's birthday appropriately, and in 1912 observance of the day extended throughout Georgia and to other States.

The deed to the Wren's Nest was acquired January 18, 1913, being transferred to the Association with fitting ceremonies in the house itself. Mr. Harris's bedroom and living-room are kept as he left them. Other rooms are used for a public library and similar purposes. For the library Mrs. Harris has given a number of books which belonged to her husband, and a collection of autographed books and photographs has been received from another source. The house is open to visitors.

UNCLE REMUS AND THE LITTLE BOY.

UNCLE REMUS AND THE LITTLE BOY.

I.

WHY THE HAWK CATCHES CHICKENS.

One day, Uncle Remus sat in the sun making a fish basket. The little boy watched him weave the white oak splits together a long time, waiting for a story. Finally a bantam rooster, wandering near, crowed shrilly three or four times. The noise broke the silence so unexpectedly that Uncle Remus jumped nervously, and then hurled the unfinished basket at the rooster, which ran away screaming and cackling. The rooster belonged to the little boy, and was a favorite pet, but the youngster laughed heartily at Uncle Remus's irritation, which was partly real and partly affected.

"Nummine!" exclaimed the old man, recovering his basket, "what fattens de chickens fattens de hawk."

"Now, Uncle Remus," the child protested, not catching the meaning of the homely proverb, "you know hawks don't eat corn and dough, and worms and bugs."

"No, dey don't," responded the old man emphatically. "Ef dey did, dat ar bantin chicken mought live ter git gray. Mos' eve'y mornin' der's a big hawk sailin' 'roun' here, en he 'll sholy git dat ar uppity little rooster. You better have 'im put in de pot now. I bin noticin' deze many odd-come-shorts dat hawks is got a spite at roosters, speshually when dey ain't too big fer um ter tote off. Dey wuz a time when de hawks ain't had no mouf' fer chicken, but dat time done gone by."

"Did n't the hawks always catch chickens, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy.

"Sholy I done tell you 'bout dat," the old man remarked, looking at the child with a great affectation of astonishment. "Now den, — rack yo' brain, en tell me ef I ain't done tol' you how come de hawk fer ter be constant a-huntin' chickens en flyin' off wid um."

The little boy thought the matter over, and then shook his head. He did n't know whether to make a vigorous denial or to say nothing. So he compromised by shaking his head.

"Well!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, "ef dat don't bang my time, Joe's dead an' Sal's a widder. You 'll wake up some er deze fine mornin's en hear yo' mammy laugh en say she got a mighty big load off'n her min' kaze dey done sont ol' man Remus ter de 'sylum. En I ain't never been tell yon dat? Hit 's in about de fns' tale I hear my grandaddy tell. I mos' shame ter go back en pick it up now."

The little boy said nothing, but sat in an expectant attitude. The old man gathered together a dozen or more splits, placed them where they would be in reach, and then began: —

"'T ain't no use ter tell you nothin' 't all 'bont how hawks does now. Dey er done broke in ter ketchin' chickens — de goshawk, de swamphawk en de blnedarter, de forky tail en de fan tail, — all un um. But way back yonder dey ain't know nothin' 't all 'bout no chicken, kaze dey ain't had de tas'e un um. I dnnner what dey did eat, bnt I hear tell dat times got so hard wid ole Brer Hawk dat he had ter scuffle 'roun' right smartnally. Yit it seem like scnfflin' ain't do no good. He fly dis away, en he fly dat, yet he ain't fin' nothin' fer ter eat, en it look like hit 'uz gwine ter be

all-night-Isom wi'd 'im. Whiles he wuz flyin' roun', he seed de Sun shinin' up dar in de elements, so he bowed his head en say, 'Howdy.' En de Sun he howdied back, he did, en dey struck up a kinder speakin' 'quaintance.

"Bimeby, Brer Hawk made so bol' ez ter tell de Sun 'bout de trouble w'at he got, en so de Sun, he up'n 'low, he did, dat ef Brer Hawk kin ketch 'im in bed, he 'll gi' 'im all de vittles he kin eat en show 'im whar ter git mo.'"

"Catch the Sun in bed, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy.

"Dat what I said, honey. Ef Brer Hawk kin ketch de Sun in bed, den de Sun say he willin' fer ter show Brer Hawk whar ter git his vittles. Dis make mo' trouble fer Brer Hawk. He got up sooner en sooner eve'y mornin', but eve'y time he lay eyes on de Sun, he wuz up en a-shinin'. Den he sot up all night, but dat ain't make no diffunce. He can't ketch de Sun in bed. Hit went on dis away twel Brer Hawk git so weak he kin skacely ruffle a fedder. He got dat poor en light dat he can't fly ag'in de win' nohow, en den he des natchally gun out.

"He 'uz hoppin 'bout in de top uv a great big pine when he hear Brer Rooster callin'

'im. He tuck a notion dat Brer Rooster wuz des makin' game un 'im, so he holler back, sezee: —

"'Don't bodder 'long er me, Brer Rooster. Scratch up yo' little grub woims en cackle over um, en eat um, but don't pester 'long er me.'

"Brer Rooster holler back, sezee: —

"'What de matter wid you? How come you look so pale? How come you look so lonesome?'

Uncle Remus made each question as near as possible an imitation of the crowing of a rooster, which amused the little boy very much.

"Well," the old man continued, "atter while Brer Hawk drapped down en sot on de fence, whar he kin talk ter Brer Rooster, kaze he so hongry it make his tongue weak. He sot dar on de fence, he did, en up'n tol' Brer Rooster 'bout how he been tryin' fer ter ketch de Sun in bed. Dis make Brer Rooster laugh twel you mought er heerd 'im squall all over de hoss lot. He 'low, sezee: —

"'Massy, massy! Why n't you tell me? Why n't you tell me long ago?'

"Wid dat, Brer Rooster up'n say, sezee, dat

dey ain't no mornin' but what he kin ketch de Sun in bed, en he tell Brer Hawk dat ef he 'll des come en roos' some'rs close by, he kin ketch de Sun de ve'y nex' mornin'. Brer Rooster say, sezee, dat when he clap his wing en crow, den de time done come fer Brer Hawk ter start off fer ter ketch de Sun in bed.

"Well, den, ole Brer Hawk look like he mighty thankful. He bowed his head, he did, en look des ez nice ez a nigger does when you gi' 'im biscuit en gravy; en he say he gwine stay ez close ter Brer Rooster ez he kin scrouge. Brer Rooster, he sorter cluck down in his goozle, en 'low, sezee: —

"'Git des ez close ez you please, Brer Hawk, but don't hunch me. I 'm mighty nervious in my sleep, en ef you hunch me endurin er de night, der 's bleedz ter be trouble.'

"Ole Brer Hawk, he say, sezee: —

"'I ain't a tetchous man myse'f, Brer Rooster, yit I speck I got manners nuff not ter pester dem what is.'

"Dey sot dar on de roos', dey did, des like two bluebirds on a fence post, en ef dey wuz any fuss made it wuz when ole Dominicker hen

dremp 'bout little Billy Black Mink, en holler'd out in 'er sleep. Dey sot dar, dey did, en nodded right along. Bimeby, 'bout er nour 'fo' day, Brer Rooster woke up, en clap his wings en holler: —

"'Now yo' time ter go!' Den he wait little, en holler n'er time: 'Now yo' time ter go!'

"Wid dat, Brer Hawk riz en flew, en he flewd so fas' en he flewd so fur dat he come ter de place whar de Sun live at, en he cotch de Sun in bed."

"The Sun in bed, Uncle Remus?" exclaimed the little boy.

"In bed!" responded the old man, with unusual emphasis, "right dar in bed. En 't want no trundle bed needer. It wuz one er deze yer big beds wid high posties. Yasser! De Sun wuz in dar, en he had de bed kivver all drawd up 'roun' his head, en he 'uz snorin' same ez somebody filin' a cowhorn. Brer Hawk rapped on de head-board, en holler out, sezee: —

"'Mos' time fer day ter break! Git up fum dar! Brek'us 'll be mighty late ef you lay dar all day!'

"Sun 'low, 'Who dat?'

"Brer Hawk say, 'T ain't nobody but me.'

"Sun 'low, 'What you wanter come wakin' me up fer? I boun' I 'll have de headache de whole blessid day.'

"Den Brer Hawk put de Sun in min' er de promise what he made. Den de Sun got mad. He 'low, sezee: —

"'How you speck I gwine fin' you in vittles? Who show you de way ter my bed?'

"Brer Hawk say it 'uz Brer Rooster. Den de Sun raise up in bed, he did, en wink one eye, en 'low, sezee: —

"'Go back dar en tell yo' Brer Rooster dat he got to fin' you in vittles.'

"Brer Hawk ain't like dis much, en he sorter hung 'roun', like he waitin' fer sumpin. Dis make de Sun mad, en he jump out er bed en run Brer Hawk out'n de house wid de poker. Brer Hawk ain't know what to do. He flewd back ter whar Brer Rooster wuz scratchin' in de trash pile, en tole 'im what de Sun say. Dis make Brer Rooster laugh. He 'low, sezee: —

"'How I gwine ter fin' you in vittles? I got a mighty big fambly ter look atter, en I be bless ef dey don't git hongrier en hongrier eve'y day dat comes.'

"Brer Hawk 'low, 'I bleedz ter eat, Brer Rooster, en I 'm lots hongrier dan what yo' fambly is.'

"Brer Rooster 'low, sezee: 'Well, Brer Hawk, you 'er mo' dan welcome ter drap down here en scratch in de trash. I speck yo' claws des ez good ez what min' is. 'Sides dat, you ain't bleedz ter holler en cackle eve'y time you fine a woim.'

"But Brer Hawk shake his head. Dat kinder doin's don't nigh suit 'im. Hit look too much like work. So he sail up in de tree-top, en sot dar, en bimeby here come ole Miss Hen wid 'er chickens, which dey let in ter scratchin' 'longside Brer Rooster. Brer Hawk look at um, en he ax hisse'f, sezee: 'What make my mouf water?' Den he 'membered 'bout how de Sun wunk at 'im, en it come 'cross his min' dat chicken meat mought tas'e good. Wid dat he drapped down on one er Brer Rooster's chilluns, en kyard it off, en it fit his appetite so mighty well dat he been eatin' Brer Rooster's fambly eve'y chance he git."

Uncle Remus paused to trim and smooth the end of a split. Then he said: —

"Brer Hawk hongry yit. You better watch out fer yo' bantin'."

II.

BROTHER BEAR AND THE HONEY ORCHARD.

One day while Uncle Remus was oiling the harness in the carriage-house, he heard the little boy's baby brother crying, and went out to investigate the matter. He soon discovered that the baby was crying for a piece of cake which the little boy held in his hand, and refused to give up. The old man stood watching long enough for the little boy to see him, whereupon he exclaimed solemnly, "Laws a massy!" Then he shook his head solemnly from side to side, and returned to the carriage-house. It was not long before the little boy followed him there. Uncle Remus pretended not to notice the youngster's presence, and began to talk to himself.

"I done put it down in my min' long time ago dat stingy folks ain't gwine ter come ter no good een. I done seed too much un it. Dar wuz ol' man Dickerson — he save money en save money; he pinch here en he pinch

dar, en he so stingy he won't buy him a dram skacely. En de gracious en de goodness! What good do it do 'im? He sot dar in de house too stingy to scratch hisse'f right hard, en swivel up en die, en now dem ar chillun er his'n is flingin' it fur en wide. Shoo! When it come ter stingy folks, take em 'way fum me! Don't lemme come nigh um! I done see too much un um."

"Well, Uncle Remus" — began the little boy, but the old man interrupted, —

"Heyo, dar! Dat you? Why n't you stay out dar en feed dat ar baby some mo'?"

"Well, Uncle Remus, I had a piece of cake for you, and the baby saw it and cried for it, and I did n't want him to have it. He gets everything, anyhow."

"What dat in yo' pocket?" asked the old man.

"Well, that 's my piece of cake."

"Den why n't you gi' de baby my piece, en den fetch me yone?"

"Then I would n't have had any."

"I speck dat 's so," said Uncle Remus, thoughtfully. "Maybe de cake mought er flung de baby in a spasm, en den I 'd a had ter got on a hoss en gallop atter de docter, en

de hoss mought er stumbled en broke my neck, en den deze yer triflin' good-fer-nothin' niggers roun' de house would 'a' had a big jollification.

"En yit," the old man went on, slowly eating the cake from the little boy's hand, "I 'spizes ter see stinginess. Hit put me in min' er ol' Brer B'ar en de honey orchard. Ef I ain't done tole you dat tale, I 'd like ter know de reason why, kaze it all de time a poppin' in my head."

The little boy was very, very sure he had never heard of the honey orchard before.

"Well," said Uncle Remus, "dey wuz one time when mos' all de creeters, horn, claw, en wing, live in de same settlement. Dey 'd have some fusses, but dey ain't had no fallin' out, en dey wuz livin' des ez satisfactual ez what folks does. Times wuz mighty hard, en 't wuz in about all dey kin do fer ter scuffle 'long en make buckle en tongue meet. Rake en scrape ez dey would, some un um 'ud hatter go ter bed hongry. Yit dey took notice er one thing, dat whiles all un um wuz gittin' po' en po'er, ole Brer B'ar wuz gittin' fatter en fatter. Whiles de t'er creeturs' ribs wuz stan'in' out like bar'l hoops, Brer B'ar wuz slick en roun'

ez a butter ball. He des waller'd in fat; he wuz too fat ter keep de flies off'n hisse'f.

"Dey all study en study how Brer B'ar kin keep so fat when times is so hard. Brer Rabbit made up his min' dat he gwine ter git at de bottom er de matter, an' so he keep his eye on Brer B'ar. He watch 'im, he did, en 't wan't long 'fo' he seed dat Brer B'ar wuz doin' mighty quare. Stidder settin' up late en talkin' politics, he 'd go ter bed wid de chickens, en by good daylight he 'd be up en gone. Dis bodder Brer Rabbit might'ly. He got so pester'd en fretted dat many 's de time when he 'd be gwine' long de road he 'd squat right flat on de groun' en scratch his head en study.

"Brer Rabbit had done got de knack er settin' up all night en sleepin' late in de day, but bimeby, one night he tuck'n pay Brer B'ar a visit fer to see what he kin fin' out. He got ter de door, he did, en scrape his foot on de step en sorter cle'r up his th'oat. Ole Miss B'ar, she come out on de porch fer ter see who 't is, en she uz monst'us perlite. She howdied wid Brer Rabbit, en ax 'im ef he won't come in en take off his things en set awhile wid um. Brer Rabbit say he don't keer ef he do, bein' 's

how he ain't seed um all in so long, en ole Miss B'ar, she rustle roun' en fotch a cheer, en ax Brer Rabbit fer ter make hisse'f at home.

"Brer Rabbit cross his legs, he did, en 'low dat he ain't seed Brer B'ar in a coon's age; en Miss B'ar, she fan herse'f wid a turkey-tail fan, en 'low dat times so hard her ole man hatter work soon en late fer ter make bofe eens meet. Den she skusen herse'f, en say she got ter go right now en fix a bag er ashes fer 'im ter take ter work wid 'im in de mornin'.

"Brer Rabbit ax what in de name er goodness Brer B'ar do wid a bag er ashes, en ole Miss B'ar laugh en say she dunner what on top side er yeth he do wid um, but she speck hit 's des one er his notions.

"Ole Miss B'ar work her fan twel it fair flutter, en she 'low, 'Goodness knows, dat ole bag er ashes is done 'casion me mo' trouble dan it wuth. But you know how men folks is, Brer Rabbit, dey 'll have der way ef it 's de las' ac'. What my ole man want wid a bag er ashes eve'y mornin' is mo'n I kin tell you, but have um he will, spite er all creation. Dey got ter be out dar by de chimbley cornder so he kin git um when he start ter work.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Whar Brer B'ar now? I ain't hear 'im in dar.'

"Ole Miss B'ar laugh twel she bent over. She 'low, 'You ain't gwine ter hear 'im nuther, Brer Babbit, 'less you happen ter hear him sno'. Sleep! I ain't never is see nobody what kin sleep like my ole man. He ain't take time ter eat, skacely, 'fo' he 's ready fer de bed, en he don't mo' 'n strike de bed 'fo' he 's soun' er sleep. I laugh, en tell 'im it 's mighty blessin' for 'im dat I ain't know what a sleepy-head he is 'fo' I marry 'im.'"

The little boy wanted to laugh, but the gravity with which Uncle Remus narrated the conversation warned him that his mirth would be ill-timed. The old man made no pause.

"Wid dat Brer Rabbit say he better be gwine, en he tip ole Miss B'ar a bow en wish 'er mighty well. He went off a little piece, he did, en sot down by de road, en twis' his mustashes, en study 'bout dat bag er ashes. He ax hisse'f wuz ole Miss Bar tryin' fer ter fool 'im, en he got so pestered dat he ain't know what ter do.

"Atter so long a time, he slipt back ter Brer B'ar's house, en, sho nuff, dar wuz de bag er ashes in de chimbley cornder, en inside de house he could hear Brer B'ar sno'in away like somebody sawin' gourds. Brer Rabbit make

up his min' dat he 'd sorter hang 'roun en see whar Brer B'ar go ter so soon in de mornin'. So he capered 'roun in de grass one half de night, en played wid de lightnin' bugs tudder half.

"Time de chickens 'gun to crow fer day, Brer B'ar wuz up en a-stirrin', en by de time it wuz light good, he' d done slung de bag er ashes 'cross his shoulder en wuz a-makin' for de woods. Brer Rabbit try ter keep up, but he skeered ter git too close, en fus' news he know Brer B'ar done make his disappearance. When dat happen, dey ain't nothin' mo' fer Brer Rabbit ter do but go home en dream 'bout what de name er goodness Brer B'ar gwine do wid dat bag er ashes.

"De nex' night Brer Rabbit played roun' en run atter lightnin' bugs twel everything got still at Brer B'ar's house, en den he went ter look fer de bag er ashes. Sho' nuff, dar 't wuz — same bag in de same chimbley cornder. Brer Rabbit felt de heft un it, en it seem like ter him dat dey wuz 'bout a bushel er ashes in dar. Den he grab holt er one cornder er de bag en tored a hole in it. Some er de ashes got up Brer Rabbit's nose, en he fin' out he bleedz ter sneeze. He hol' in ez long ez he

kin, en make a break fer ter git ez fur fum de house ez he kin 'fo' de sneeze come. He helt his breff, he did, long ez he kin, en when de sneeze did bust aloose, gentermens! he turned a fair somerset backerds, en dey wuz sech a splutterment dat de Guinny hens got ter hollerin' en de chickens ter cacklin', en ole Brer Rabbit tuck his foot in his han' en lit out fum dar.

"Well, suh, nex' mornin' he got up some sooner dan he in de habits er doin', en he went 'roun' by Brer B'ar's house. He went 'roun' de same way whar he see Brer B'ar go de mornin' 'fo' dat, en he ain't gone fur twel he see whar de ashes been spillin' out'n de bag. Dat what he make de hole in de bag fer. Eve'y time Brer B'ar take a step, he 'd jolt de ashes out. Brer Rabbit, he foller'd de track er de ashes. He foller'd long, he did, up hill en down, thoo bushes en thoo briers, twel bimeby he come 'pon Brer B'ar, en what you reckon dat creetur wuz a-doin'?"

Uncle Remus paused, as if he expected the youngster to give an answer. Receiving none he went on, —

"Well, suh, he wan't doin' nothin' in de roun' worl' but eatin' honey! Pyo honey!

Eatin' honey en cleanin' de comb. Des de natchul start-naked bee-juice! When Brer Rabbit see dat, he like ter fainted. He flung bofe han's up en fell down on de groun' like he dead. De sight skeer 'im."

"Why, there was n't anything to frighten him," said the little boy.

"He bleedz ter be skeered. Ole Brer B'ar ain't look like hisse'f. He done empty de bag er ashes on de groun' en waller in um twel he look like he done turn gray endurin' de night. He put um on 'im, I speck, fer ter keep bees fum stingin' 'im. Dar he wuz, up a tree, eatin' honey by de han'ful, en all 'roun' dat place dey wuz a clump er big poplar trees. Eve'y one un um wuz holler, en eve'y one un um wuz full er honey, kaze Brer Rabbit seed de bees des a-swarmin' in en out constant. He sot dar, he did, en watch Brer B'ar eatin' honey twel he 'gun ter dribble at de mouf, en he got so hongry dat bimeby he went up closter, en ax Brer B'ar fer ter please, suh, gi' 'im a han'ful er honey.

"Brer B'ar 'low, 'G' way fum dar, you triflin', low down vilyun! I gi' you nothin'! Go on 'bout yo' business, 'fo' I come down dar en w'ar you out ter a frazzle!'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Please, suh, Brer B'ar, des gimme a little piece; des a teenchy bit er de comb, Brer B'ar.'

"Wid dat, Brer B'ar sorter scramble down de tree like he comin' atter Brer Rabbit, en I bet you Brer Rabbit got up en dusted 'way fum dar. He tuck a nigh cut home, en he sot down in de chimbley cornder en studied out a plan fer ter git even wid Brer B'ar. So de nex' day, whiles Brer B'ar done gone ter de honey orchard, Brer Rabbit 'semble all de creeturs, horn, claw, en wing, en tell um how de lan' lay, en how Brer B'ar been foolin' um. He say 't ain't no wonder dat Brer B'ar rollin' in fat when he go off dar eve'y day en gorge hisse'f on honey, en not let nobody get a smell un it, much less a tas'e.

"All de creeturs 'gree wid Brer Rabbit, en dey say dey 'd do anything he tell um, ef dey kin l'arn Brer B'ar some manners. Den Brer Rabbit say he speck de bes' way ter do is ter git up a harrycane. De creeturs ax 'im how de name er goodness dey gwine do dat, en Brer Rabbit say he 'll fix it. Den he tuck um all out dar close ter de honey orchard, en all de big creeturs he made stan' by big saplin's, en de little uns he put at de little saplin's.

"He 'low, 'Now den, when you hear me holler, you rub up 'gin' deze saplin's en shake um ez hard ez you kin.'

"De wing creeturs what kin fly, he made git up in de top er de trees. He 'low, 'When you hear me holler, you flutter des ez hard ez you kin.'

"De wing creeturs what kin run, he made um git in de broom-sage, en he 'low, 'When you hear me holler, run thoo de grass ez hard ez you kin.'

"Brer Rabbit had a long rope, en he went off a little piece fer ter git a good start, en terrectly here he come, draggin' de rope en runnin' like a yaller dog wid a tin pail tied ter his tail. Brer B'ar, up dar in de bee-tree, hear 'im runnin', en ax 'im what de matter.

"Wid dat Brer Rabbit fetch a whoop, en 'low, 'Dey 's a harrycane comin', Brer B'ar, en I bleedz ter run somer's en tie myse'f ter a tree, fer ter keep fum bein' blow'd away. Don't you hear it comin'?'

"Co'se, when Brer Rabbit holler'd, de creeturs at de saplin's 'gun ter shake um, en de wing creeturs in de trees 'gun ter flutter, en de yuthers 'gun ter run in de grass, en dey make de biggest kind er noise. Brer B'ar, he

scrambled 'bout half-way down de bee-tree, en den he turn eve'ything loose en hit de groun' *kerbiff!* Look like 't wuz nuff ter jolt de life out'n 'im.

"He say, 'Fer massy sake, Brer Rabbit, tie me 'long wid you. Dis des ez good a place ez you 'll fin'. Tie me wid you, Brer Rabbit.'

"De creeturs keep on makin' der fuss, en Brer B'ar git skeerder en skeerder. Brer Rabbit tuck Brer B'ar at his word, en he tied 'im hard en fas' ter a tree. When he had 'im fastened so he can't git loose, he call ter all de creeturs, Brer Rabbit did, en tell um ter come look at Brer B'ar.

"Den he 'low, 'Whiles de harrycane gwine on, less us go git a bait er honey. Dey ain't no win' what kin blow Brer B'ar off whiles he fix dis away.'

"Wid dat dey raided de honey orchard, en gobble up all dey want, en tuck some home fer der wimmen folks en chilluns."

"Who unfastened Brother Bear?" the little boy asked.

"Eh-eh, honey!" exclaimed Uncle Remus. "You pushes yo' inquirements too fur. Dat what 's in de tale I kin tell you; dat what ain't you 'll hatter figger out fer yo'se'f."

III.

BROTHER RABBIT HAS FUN AT THE FERRY.

One night when the little boy ran out to Uncle Remus's house, he heard the old man talking with some of the other negroes about an accident at Armour's Ferry. The flat, as the ferry-boat was called, had broken the rope which was used to tow it across the Oconee, and had drifted down the river. Two mules, hitched to a wagon, jumped overboard and were drowned.

"Ah, Lord," exclaimed Uncle Remus, when the negroes had gone. "Ef ole Brer B'ar had been de fe'yman, I lay dey would n't er been none er dat kinder gwines on."

"Uncle Johnny Roach is the ferryman now," remarked the little boy, by way of saying something.

"Dat man is ole, mon," said Uncle Remus; "he ole en shaky. He bin dar I dunner how long. He gray en trimbly. 'T wan't dat away wid Brer B'ar. He wuz young, en he ain't

had a gray ha'r in his head. Folks use ter come 'long dat away, en gi' 'im a sev'mpunce des ter see 'im r'ar back on his footses en snatch dat ar flat 'cross de river. I tell you, mon, dem wuz gay times."

Here Uncle Remus paused, and looked steadily into the fireplace, and sighed. The impression he left on the little boy was that he himself had crossed the ferry while Brother Bear was in charge. But where was the story? The youngster looked at the old man intently, and waited patiently.

"Brer B'ar wuz a mighty fine fe'yman," said Uncle Remus, after awhile, taking off his spectacles and rubbing them gently on his knee. "Dey ain't no two ways 'bout dat. But dey wuz one time when he got outdone. I dunner what time er de day, ner what day er de mont', but 't was some'rs 'twixt two sun-ups. Brer B'ar wuz settin' in de shade, wishin' dat some un 'ud come long en drap a sev'mpunce in his pocket. He wuz des 'bout ter doze off when he hear somebody holler.

"Man 'cross de river say, 'Hello!'

"Brer B'ar raise up en 'low, 'How you like fer somebody ter call you Hello?'

"Man holler back, 'Come put me 'cross.'

"Brer B'ar 'spon', 'Ah-yi.'

"De man wuz ridin' a gray mar, en de gray mar' had a gray colt wid 'er. Brer B'ar swung de flat on t'er side, en whiles she wuz a-swingin' he uz countin' his money.

"Oh, de rope is long, ketch a holt, ketch a holt,
Oh, de rope is long, ketch a holt,—
A dime fer de mar', a dime fer de man,
En a thrip fer de little gray colt."

"De flat she swung 'roun', en Brer B'ar he sung out, 'Ride in, mister, en make yo'se'f at home.'

"Right den en dar," continued Uncle Remus, leaning back in his chair and lifting his eyebrows, "right den en dar de trouble begun. Nobody wa'n't ter blame; nobody wa'n't de 'casion un it. Hit des come up dry so, des like de measles did when you had um."

"What trouble was it, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked.

"Hit des broke out by hit's own 'lone se'f," responded the old man, solemnly. "De man, he cluck ter de mar', en try fer ter ride 'er in de flat, but de mar' she hilt er head down en sorter snort, en 'fuse ter budge. De man try ter coax 'er, but she won't be coaxed. Den he gi' 'er de whip en spur, but she whirl

'roun' en 'fuse ter go in de flat. She 'd go up, she 'd go down, she 'd go anywhar en eve'ywhar 'ceptin' in de flat. Den de man lit en tried ter lead 'er, but de mar' drug 'im 'bout over de san' like he ain't weigh mo' 'n two poun' en a half. Brer B'ar try ter he'p, but 't ain't do no good. De colt seed dat his mammy wuz skeer'd, en he 'gun ter whicker en squeal en run 'roun' like a pig wid hot dish-water on his back. Dis make a bad matter wuss.

"Dar dey stood. De man, he study, en Brer B'ar, he study, but 'tain't do no good. Bimeby Brer B'ar look 'roun', en who should he see settin' cross-legged on a stump a-watchin' un um, but ole Brer Rabbit? Dar he wuz, des ez natchul ez one er deze yer dagarrytypes. Fum whar he stood Brer B'ar could n't tell whedder Brer Rabbit wuz laughin' er whedder he wuz cryin', but his face wuz mighty wrinkled up. Brer B'ar call 'im, but Brer Rabbit shuck his head. Brer B'ar ax 'im ter come he'p 'im git de mar' on de flat, but Brer Rabbit shuck his head. Brer B'ar wuz 'bout ter 'buze Brer Rabbit 'fo' comp'ny, but a n'er notion struck 'im, en he tuck en wobbled off ter whar Brer Rabbit wuz settin'.

Time he got whar dey could hold er confab, Brer Rabbit 'low: —

"'What de name er goodness is you all tryin' ter do down dar? What kinder capers is you cuttin' up? I bin settin' here watchin' you, en des dyin' er laughin' at de way you en de man en dem creeturs been gwine on.'

"Brer B'ar try ter 'splain, but Brer Rabbit keep a-talkin': —

"'Go on back down dar, Brer B'ar, en fool 'roun' wid um some mo'. Fer gracious sake lemme have my fun out! Go on, Brer B'ar — go on! Whiles I 'm a-settin' here chawin' my terbacker, lemme 'joy myse'f, en git de wuf er my holiday. Go joon 'roun' some mo'!'

"Den Brer B'ar up'n tell Brer Rabbit what de matter is, en Brer Rabbit laugh en holler fit ter kill hisse'f. He low: 'My goodness, Brer B'ar, I had de idee dat you all been cuttin' up dem capers a-purpose.'

"Brer B'ar 'low: 'No, bless gracious! Dat man yonder want ter be put 'cross. He des bleedz ter be put 'cross, but how I gwine do it, I 'll never tell you.'

"Brer Rabbit say, sezee: 'Well, Brer B'ar, ef you let dat bodder you mo'n a minnit, you 'll

make me b'lieve dat you got dropsy er de head. I hear tell dat lots er folks is gittin' down wid dat kinder sickness.'

"Den Brer B'ar say he speck he got it, kaze he can't make no 'rangement fer ter git dat old mar' on de flat. Brer Rabbit look at 'im right hard, en sorter wrinkle up his face. He 'low, sezee: —

"'Brer B'ar, hit des ez easy ez gwine ter sleep in a swing.'

"Brer B'ar say, sezee: 'Brer Rabbit, how I gwine do! Ef you 'll tell me dat, I 'll do anything you ax me; you can't ax me nothin' I won't do.'

"Brer Rabbit 'low, sezee: 'Well den, Brer B'ar, all you got ter do is ter shove de colt on de flat, en de mammy 'll foller right atter.'

"Old Brer B'ar went a-wobblin' back ter de ríver, en when he got dar he driv de colt on de flat, en de mar' followed atter, same ez ef she 'd 'a' been born en raise on a flat. When Brer B'ar see dat, he 'low, '*Well!*'

"De man ax 'im who tol' 'im how ter do dat. Brer B'ar make answer dat 't wuz Brer Rabbit, en den he went on to tell de man 'bout what er soon creetur Brer Rabbit is, dat nobody can't fool 'im, en nobody can't outdo

'im. De man lissen, an den he 'low dat he comin' back dat away in a day er two, en he bet a pot er honey agin a dish er cream dat he kin outdo Brer Babbit. Brer B'ar tuck de bet, en den dey shuck han's ter make it mo' bindin'.

"Well, 't wan't long atter dat 'fo' here come de man back, en dis time he had two mar's. He wuz ridin' one, en leadin' de udder, en dey wuz bofe des ez much alike ez two peas. Dey wuz de same color, de same size, en de same gait. Brer B'ar tuck de man 'cross on t'er side, en den he say dat now is de time fer ter settle de bet. He 'low, sezee: —

"'One er deze mar's is de mammy, en de udder one is de colt. Now call up Brer Rabbit, en ax 'im ter tell me which is which, en which is de udder. Ax 'im ter tell me which is de mammy, en which is de colt. En he ain't got ter look in der mouf nudder.'

"Brer B'ar look at um mighty close, en den he shake his head.

"Man say, 'Go fetch me my dish er cream.'

"Brer B'ar look, en look, en still he shake his head.

"Man say, 'Go fetch my dish er cream.'

"Brer B'ar feel mighty bad, kaze he smell

de pot er honey in de man's saddle-bags, en it make his mouf water.

"Man keep on sayin', 'Go fetch my dish er cream.'

"But Brer B'ar ain't gwine ter give up dat away. He done made de 'rangement fer ter call Brer Rabbit when de man come back, en he went 'pon top er de hill en holler fer 'im. I tell you now, 't wan't long 'fo' Brer Rabbit hove in sight. He come a-hoppin' en a-jumpin', he come a-rippin' en a-rarin'.

"Brer B'ar 'low, sezee: 'Ef you know'd what you got ter do, I lay you would n't be in sech a hurry.'

"Den he up'n tell Brer Rabbit de whole circumstance er de case. Brer Rabbit laugh, but Brer B'ar he look sollumcolly. Brer Rabbit tuck'n tol' Brer B'ar fer ter git two bunches er grass en put um dar front er de mar's. Brer B'ar do des like Brer Rabbit tell 'im, en den de mar's sot in ter eatin'; but one un um eat 'er bunch fust, en start ter eatin' on t'er bunch. Den de mar' what wuz eatin' on dat bunch helt up 'er head.

"Brer Rabbit 'low, sezee: 'Dat un what holdin' up 'er head, she de mammy.'

"De man he give up. He say dat beat his

time, en den he ax Brer Rabbit how kin he tell.

"Brer Rabbit 'low, sezee: 'De colt, bein' ez she is de youngest, is got de bes' toofies. De best toofies eat de grass fust. Den when de mammy see de colt ain't got none, she willin' ter 'vide wid 'er. Ef de mammy had made at de colt's bundle, de colt 'd sholy 'a' bit at 'er.'

"De man look 'stonish, but he ain't sati'-fied. He gun Brer B'ar de pot er honey, but he say he got n'er pot, en he willin' ter bet dat he kin fool Brer Rabbit nex' time. Brer B'ar tuck de bet.

"Den de man lef' his hosses dar, en tuck a little basket en went off in de woods. He wuz gone a right smart little whet, but bimeby, here he come back. He hilt de basket high, so Brer Rabbit can't see de inside, en den he hung it on a tree lim'. Den he ax Brer Rabbit what de basket got in it.

"Brer Rabbit study, en den he 'low, sezee: '*De sparrer kin tell you.*'

"De man look at 'im hard, en den he say, sezee: 'What kinder creetur is you, nohow?'

"He tuck de basket down, he did, en sho' 'nuff, dar wuz a sparrer in it. He gun Brer

B'ar de t'er pot, en ez he wuz gwine, he holler back at Brer Rabbit, sezee: —

"'You er one er deze yer graveyard rabbits, dat w'at you is.'

"Brer Rabbit laugh, but he ain't say nothin'. He des dip 'is paw in de pot er honey en lick it off, en he work his mouf like it tas'e mighty good."

"Uncle Remus," said the little boy, as the old man paused, "how did Brother Rabbit know there was a sparrow in the basket?"

"Who say he know it, honey?"

"Did n't you say so?"

"Shoo, honey, freshun up yo' 'membunce. When de man ax Brer Rabbit, What in dar? he make answer dat a sparrer kin tell 'im, kaze a sparrer flyin' 'roun' kin see what in de basket."

"Well," said the little boy, with a sigh, "I thought Brother Rabbit knew."

"Luck tol' 'im, honey; Brer Rabbit wuz a mighty man fer luck."

IV.

DEATH AND THE NEGRO MAN.

One day Uncle Remus was grinding the axe with which he chopped kindling for the kitchen and the big house. The axe was very dull. It was full of "gaps," and the work of putting an edge on it was neither light nor agreeable. A negro boy turned the grindstone, and the little boy poured on water when water was needed.

"Ef dis yer axe wuz a yard longer, it ud be a cross cut saw, en den ef we had de lumber we could saw it up en build us a house," said the old man.

The negro boy rolled his eyes and giggled, seeing which Uncle Remus bore so heavily on the axe that the grindstone could hardly be turned. The negro boy ceased giggling, but he continued to roll his eyes.

"Turn it!" exclaimed the old man. "Turn it! Ef you don't turn it, I'll make you stan' dar plum twel night gwine thoo de motions.

I 'll make you do like de nigger man done when he got tired er work."

The old man stopped talking, but the grinding went on. After awhile, the little boy asked, —

"What did the man do when he got tired of work?"

"Dat 's a tale, honey, en tellin' tales is playin'," replied Uncle Remus. He wiped the blade of the axe on the palm of his hand, and tried the edge with his thumb. "She won't shave," he said, by way of comment, "but I speck she 'll do ter knock out kindlin'. Yit ef I had de time, I 'd like ter stan' here en see how long dish yer triflin' vilyun would roll dem eyes at me."

In a little while the axe was supposed to be sharp enough, and then, dismissing the negro boy, Uncle Remus seated himself on one end of the frame that supported the grindstone, wiped his forehead on his coat sleeve, and proceeded to enjoy what he called a breathing spell.

"Dat ar nigger man you hear me talk about," he remarked, "wuz a-gittin' sorter ol', en he got so he ain't want ter work nohow you kin fix it. When folks hangs back fum work

what dey bin set ter do, hit natchully makes bad matters wuss, en dat de way 't wuz with dish yer nigger man. He helt back, en he hung back, en den de white folks got fretted wid 'im en sot 'im a task. Gentermens! dat nigger man wuz mad. He wuz one er deze yer Affiky niggers, en you know how dey is — bowlegged en bad tempered. He quoiled en he quoiled when he 'uz by his own lone se'f, en he quoiled when he 'uz wid tudder folks.

"He got so mad dat he say he hope ole Gran'sir Death 'll come take him off, en take his marster en de overseer 'long wid 'im. He talk so long en he talk so loud, dat de white folks hear what he say. Den de marster en de overseer make it up 'mongst deyse'f dat dey gwine ter play a prank on dat nigger man.

"So den, one night, a leetle atter midnight, de marster got 'm a white counterpane, he did, en wrop hisse'f in it, en den he cut two eye-holes in a piller-case, en drawed it down over his head, en went down ter de house whar de nigger man stay. Nigger man ain't gone ter bed. He been fryin' meat en bakin' ashcake, en he sot dar in de cheer noddin', wid grease in his mouf en big hunk er ashcake in his

han'. De door wuz half-way open, en de fire burnin' low.

"De marster walk in, he did, en sorter cle'r up his th'oat. Nigger man ain't wake up. Ef he make any movement, it uz ter clinch de ashcake a leetle tighter. Den de marster knock on de door — *blim-blim-blim!* Nigger man sorter fling his head back, but 't wan't long 'fo' hit drapt forrerd ag'in, en he went on wid his noddin' like nothin' ain't happen. De marster knock some mo' — *blam-blam-blam!* Dis time de nigger wake up en roll his eye-balls roun'. He see de big white thing, en he skeered ter move. His han' shake so he tu'n de ashcake loose.

"Nigger man 'low, 'Who dat?'

"De marster say: 'You call me, en I come.'

"Nigger man say: 'I ain't call you. What yo' name?'

"Marster 'low, 'Grandsir Death.'

"Nigger man shake so he can't skacely set still. De col' sweat come out on 'im. He 'low, 'Marse Death, I ain't call you. Somebody been fool you.'

"De marster 'low, 'I been hear you call me p'intedly. I listen at you ter-day, en yis-

tiddy, en day 'fo' yistiddy. You say you want me ter take you en yo' marster en de overseer. Now I done come at yo' call.'

"Nigger man shake wuss. He say: 'Marse Death, go git de overseer fust. He lots bigger en fatter dan what I is. You 'll like him de bes'. Please, suh, don't take me dis time, en I won't bodder you no mo' long ez I live.'

"De marster 'low, 'I come fer de man dat call me! I 'm in a hurry! Daylight mus' n't ketch me here. Come on!'

"Well, suh, dat nigger man make a break for de winder, he did, en he went thoo it like a frog divin' in de mill pon'. He tuck ter de woods, en he 'uz gone mighty nigh a week. When he come back home he went ter work, en he work harder dan any er de res'. Somebody come 'long en try ter buy 'im, but his marster 'low he won't take lev'm hunder'd dollars for 'im, — cash money, paid down in his han'!"

V.

WHERE THE HARRYCANE COMES FROM.

WHILE Uncle Remus was telling the little boy how the negro man had been frightened by his master, the clouds began to gather in the southwest, dark and threatening. They rose higher and higher, and presently they began to fly swiftly overhead. Uncle Remus studied them carefully a moment, and then remarked sententiously : —

" Mo' win' dan water, I speck."

" How can you tell, Uncle Remus ? " asked the little boy.

" Caze when cloud got water in it you kin see de shadder er de rain ; you can see where she starts ter break off fum de cloud. Dat cloud yonder look black, but she 's all stirred up ; you can't see no rain trailin' down. She look like she been tousled and tumbled."

Just then the old man and the little boy felt the cool wind strike their faces, and the leaves of the trees began to rustle. Straight-

way they heard a sighing sound in the distance, which gradually increased to a steady roar, accompanied by an occasional gleam of lightning and rumbling of thunder.

"I speck we better git in under de shingles," said Uncle Remus. "It mought be a harrycane, an den agin it mought n't."

They went into the old negro's cabin, and sat there watching the approaching storm. It was not much of a storm after all. There was a very high wind, which seemed to blow through the tops of the trees (as Uncle Remus expressed it, "She rid high") without reaching the ground. While the gale in the upper air was at its height, there was a sudden downpour of hail, which rattled on the roof with startling effect for a few moments. In half an hour the clouds had been whisked away out of sight, and the sun was shining again. The little boy had a good many remarks to make about the wind and the hail, and a great many questions to ask. Uncle Remus himself was unusually talkative, and, finally, in response to some suggestion of the child's, said: —

"Dem what done seed one harrycane ain't gwine hone atter no mo' — dat dey ain't. I

use ter hear ole Miss talk 'bout a bed tick dat wuz blow'd fum Jones county mos' ter 'Gusty. Dat same harrycane blow'd de roof off'n a house whar de folks wuz eatin' supper, en did n't put de candle out. Dat what ole Miss say," said the old man, noting the little boy's look of astonishment, — " dat what ole Miss say, en she yo' gran-mammy. You kin 'spute it ef you wanter. It tuck a mule en landed 'im in de tree top, en tuck de mattress fum under a baby in de cradle en lef' de baby layin' dar. I wuz stannin' right by when ole Miss sesso."

" Where do the harrycanes start from, Uncle Remus? " asked the little boy.

The old man chuckled, as he took a chew of tobacco: —

" What de use er me tellin' you, honey? You won't nigh believe me, en mo'n dat; you 'll go up yander en tell Miss Sally dat de ole nigger done gone ravin' 'stracted."

" Now, Uncle Remus, you know I won't," protested the little boy.

" Well, folks lots older en bigger dan what you is ud go en do it, en not so much ez bat der eyes."

The old man paused, took off his spectacles,

and rubbed his eyes with thumb and forefinger. Replacing the glasses, he looked carefully around, laid his hand confidentially on the little boy's shoulder, and said in a low whisper: —

"I 'll tell you whar de harrycane starts. Dey starts in de big swamp! In a hollow tree! Down dar whar de bullace vines grows! Dat 's whar dey starts."

"I don't see how that can be," said the puzzled youngster.

"I speck not," remarked Uncle Remus, dryly. "You dunner how 't is dat dat ar acorn in yo' han' is got a great big oak tree in it. Dey got ter be a startin' place. Ef trees wuz ter start out trees, you 'd see a monst'us upsettin' all 'roun' ev'eywheres. Dey 'd be trouble, mon, en a heap un it."

"But how can a harrycane start in a hollow tree, Uncle Remus?" the child asked.

"Well, suh, one time when I wuz a little bigger dan what you is, dey wuz a ole Affiky man live on de place, en he kep' a-tellin' me tales, and bimeby one day he 'low he wanter shew me some harrycane seed. I ain't had much sense, but I had 'nuff fer ter tell 'im I don't wanter look at um, kaze I fear'd dey 'd

sprout en come up right 'fo' my eyes. Den dat ole Affiky man, he squinch his eyes at me en tell me de tale how de harrycane start.

"Hit 's all on account er ole Sis Swamp-Owl. All de birds er de a'r sot her ole man fer ter watch de vittles one time, en he tuck'n went ter sleep en let some un steal it. Dey kotch 'im sleep, en fum dat time out dey start in ter fight 'im eve'y time he show his head in daylight. Dis make Ole Sis Swamp-Owl mad, en so one day, when de hot wedder come, she make up her min' dat she gwine ter gi' de tudder birds some trouble. She come out de holler tree en sot up in de top lim's. She look to'rds sundown, rain-seeds floatin' 'roun'; she look up in de elements, dey look hazy. She tap on de tree.

"'Wake up, ole man; harrycane gittin' ripe.'

"She stretch out 'er wings, so — en flop um down — dis away — en right den an dar de harrycane seed sprouted."

Uncle Remus used his arms to illustrate the motion of the wings.

"When she flop 'er wings, de tree leafs 'gun ter rustle. She flop um some mo', en de lim's 'gun ter shake, en de win' kotch up

mo' win, en git harder en harder, twel bimeby it look like it gwine ter claw de grass out de groun'. Den de thunder en de lightnin' dey jin'd it, en it des went a-whirlin'.

"Sence dat time, whenever ole Sis Owl gits tired er de crows en de jaybirds, en de bee-martins pickin' at her en her folks, she des comes out en flops her wings, en dar 's yo' harrycane."

VI.

WHY BROTHER WOLF DID N'T EAT THE LITTLE RABBITS.

"UNCLE REMUS," said the little boy one day, "why don't you come up to the big house sometimes, and tell me stories?"

"Shoo, honey, de spoon hatter go ter de bowl's house. Ef I wuz atter you ter tell me tales, I 'd come up dar en set in de back porch en lissen at you eve'y day, en sometimes eve'y night. But when de spoon want anything, it hatter go ter de bowl. Hit bleedz ter be dat away."

"Well, you used to come."

"Des so!" exclaimed Uncle Remus. "But whar wuz you 'bout dat time? Right flat er yo' back, dat 's whar you wuz. You laid dar en swaller'd dat doctor truck twel I be blest ef you had mo' heft dan a pa'tridge egg wid' de innerds blow'd out. En dar wuz Miss Sally a-cryin' en gwine on constant. Ef she wan't cryin' bout you, she wuz quoilin' at me

en Marse John. 'Oman tongue ain't got no Sunday. Co'se, when I git dar whar you wuz, I hatter set down en tell tales fer ter make you fergit 'bout de fuss dat wuz gwine on. I 'member one time," Uncle Remus went on, laughing, "I wuz settin' dar by yo' bed, tellin' some great tale er nudder, en de fus' news I know'd I woke up and foun' myse'f fast asleep, en you woke up en foun' yo'se'f in de land er Nod. Dar we wuz, — me in de cheer, en you in de bed; en I 'd nod at you, en you 'd sno' back at me; en dar wuz de old torty-shell cat settin' by de h'ath, runnin' dat ar buzz-wheel what cats has got somewhars in der innerds; en de clock wuz a-clockin' en de candle a-splutterin'; en des 'bout dat time Miss Sally come in en rap me 'pon topper de naked place on my head wid er thimble; en I kotch my breff like a cow a-coughin', en den Miss Sally start in ter quoilin', en Marse John ax 'er what she doin', en she 'low she des whisperin' ter me; en Marse John say ef she call dat whisperin', he dunner what she call squallin'; en den I up en groanded one er deze yer meetin'-house groans.

"Dem wuz great times, mon," continued the old man, after pausing to recover his breath.

"Dey mos' sholy wuz. Hit look like ter me 'bout dem days dat you wan't no bigger dan a young rabbit atter de hide been tuck off. You cert'nly wuz spare-made den. I sot dar by yo' bed, en I say ter myse'f dat ef I wuz de ole Brer Wolf en you wuz a young rabbit, I would n't git hongry nuff fer ter eat you, caze you wuz too bony."

"When did Brother Wolf want to eat the young rabbit, Uncle Remus?" inquired the little boy, thinking that he saw the suggestion of a story here.

He was not mistaken. The old man regarded him with well feigned astonishment.

"Ain't I done tole you 'bout dat, honey? Des run over in yo' min', en see ef I ain't."

The youngster shook his head most emphatically.

"Well," said Uncle Remus, "ole Brer Wolf want ter eat de little Rabs all de time, but dey wuz one time in 'tickeler dat dey make his mouf water, en dat wuz de time when him en Brer Fox wuz visitin' at Brer Rabbit's house. De times wuz hard, but de little Rabs wuz slick en fat, en des ez frisky ez kittens. Ole Brer Rabbit wuz off som'ers, en Brer Wolf en Brer Fox wuz waitin 'fer 'im.

De little Rabs wuz playin' 'roun', en dough dey wuz little dey kep' der years open. Brer Wolf look at um out'n de cornder uv his eyes, en lick his chops en wink at Brer Fox, en Brer Fox wunk back at 'im. Brer Wolf cross his legs, en den Brer Fox cross his'n. De little Rabs, dey frisk en dey frolic.

"Brer Wolf ho'd his head to'rds um en 'low, 'Dey er mighty fat.'

"Brer Fox grin, en say, 'Man, hush yo' mouf!'

"De little Rabs frisk en frolic, en play furder off, but dey keep der years primed.

"Brer Wolf look at um en 'low, 'Ain't dey slick en purty?'

"Brer Fox chuckle, en say, 'Oh, I wish you 'd hush!'

"De little Rabs play off furder en furder, but dey keep der years open.

"Brer Wolf smack his mouf; en 'low, 'Dey er joosy en tender.'

"Brer Fox roll his eye en say, 'Man, ain't you gwine ter hush up, 'fo' you gi' me de fidgets?'

"De little Rabs dey frisk en dey frolic, but dey hear eve'ything dat pass.

"Brer Wolf lick out his tongue quick, en 'low, 'Less us whirl in en eat um.'

"Brer Fox say, 'Man, you make me hongry! Please hush up!'

"De little Rabs play off furder en furder, but dey know 'zackly what gwine on. Dey frisk en dey frolic, but dey got der years wide open.

"Den Brer Wolf make a bargain wid Brer Fox dat when Brer Rabbit git home, one un um ud git 'im wropped up in a 'spute 'bout fust one thing en den anudder, whiles tudder one ud go out en ketch de little Rabs.

"Brer Fox 'low, 'You better do de talkin', Brer Wolf, en lemme coax de little Rabs off. I got mo' winnin' ways wid chilluns dan what you is.'

"Brer Wolf say, 'You can't make gourd out'n punkin, Brer Fox. I ain't no talker. Yo' tongue lots slicker dan mine. I kin bite lots better'n I kin talk. Dem little Rabs don't want no coaxin'; dey wants ketchin' — dat what dey wants. You keep ole Brer Rabbit busy, en I 'll ten' ter de little Rabs.'

"Bofe un um know 'd dat whichever cotch de little Rabs, de tudder one ain't gwine smell hide ner hair un um, en dey flew up en got ter 'sputin', en whiles dey wuz 'sputin' en gwine on dat away, de little Rabs put off down

de road, — *blickety-blickety*, — for ter meet der daddy. Kase dey know'd ef dey stayed dar dey 'd git in big trouble.

"Dey went off down de road, de little Rabs did, en dey ain't gone so mighty fur 'fo' dey meet der daddy comin' long home. He had his walkin' cane in one han' en a jug in de udder, en he look ez big ez life, en twice ez natchul.

"De little Rabs run to'rds 'im en holler, 'What you got, daddy? What you got, daddy?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Nothin' but er jug er 'lasses.'

"De little Rabs holler, 'Lemme tas'e, daddy! Lemme tas'e, daddy!'

"Den ole Brer Rabbit sot de jug down in de road en let um lick de stopper a time er two, en atter dey done get der win' back, dey up'n tell 'im 'bout de 'greement dat Brer Wolf en Brer Fox done make, en 'bout de 'spute what dey had. Ole Brer Rabbit sorter laugh ter hisse'f, en den he pick up his jug en jog on to'rds home. When he git mos' dar he stop en tell de little Rabs fer stay back dar out er sight, en wait twel he call um 'fo' dey come. Dey wuz mighty glad ter do des like

dis, kaze dey 'd done seed Brer Wolf tushes, en Brer Fox red tongue, en dey huddle up in de broom-sage ez still ez a mouse in de flour bar'l.

"Brer Rabbit went on home, en sho 'nuff, he fin' Brer Wolf en Brer Fox waitin' fer 'im. Dey 'd done settle der 'spute, en dey wuz settin' dar des ez smilin' ez a basket er chips. Dey pass de time er day wid Brer Rabbit, en den dey ax 'im what he got in de jug. Brer Rabbit hummed en haw'd, en looked sorter sollum.

"Brer Wolf look like he wuz bleedz ter fin' out what wuz in de jug, en he keep a pesterin' Brer Rabbit 'bout it; but Brer Rabbit des shake his head en look sollum, en talk 'bout de wedder en de craps, en one thing en anudder. Bimeby Brer Fox make out he wuz gwine atter a drink er water, en he slip out, he did, fer ter ketch de little Rabs. Time he git out de house, Brer Rabbit look all 'roun' ter see ef he lis'nen, en den he went ter de jug en pull out de stopper.

"He han' it ter Brer Wolf en say, 'Tas'e dat.'

"Brer Wolf tas'e de 'lasses, en smack his mouf. He 'low, 'What kinder truck dat? Hit sho is good.'

"Brer Rabbit git up close ter Brer Wolf en say, 'Don't tell nobody. Hit's Fox-blood.'

"Brer Wolf look 'stonish'. He 'low, 'How you know?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'I knows what I knows!'

"Brer Wolf say, 'Gimme some mo'!'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'You kin git some mo' fer yo'se'f easy 'nuff, en de fresher 't is, de better.'

"Brer Wolf 'low, 'How you know?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'I knows what I knows!'

"Wid dat Brer Wolf stepped out, en start to'rds Brer Fox. Brer Fox seed 'im comin', en he sorter back off. Brer Wolf got little closer, en bimeby he make a dash at Brer Fox. Brer Fox dodge, he did, en den he put out fer de woods wid Brer Wolf right at his heels.

"Den atter so long a time, atter Brer Rabbit got done laughin', he call up de little Rabs, gi' um some 'lasses fer supper, en spanked um en sont um ter bed."

"Well, what did he spank 'em for, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy.

"Ter make um grow, honey, — des ter make um grow! Young creeturs is got ter have der hide loosen'd dat away, same ez young chilluns."

"Did Brother Wolf catch Brother Fox?"

"How I know, honey? Much ez I kin do ter foller de tale when it keeps in de big road, let 'lone ter keep up wid dem creeturs whiles dey gone sailin' thoo de woods. De tale ain't persoo on atter um no furder dan de place whar dey make der disappear'nce. I tell you now, when I goes in de woods, I got ter know whar I 'm gwine."

VII.

MRS. PARTRIDGE HAS A FIT.

"I RECKON maybe you done got de idee dat Brer Rabbit is in about de smartest creeter in de whole er creation," said Uncle Remus, after he had cleaned out his pipe, and refilled it. "Well, suh, ef you got dat idee, you er mighty much mistaken, kaze eve'y once in a while sump'n er nudder 'ud happen fer ter take de starch out'n Brer Rabbit. Hit allers happen dat away. Go whar you will en when you may, en stay long ez you choosen ter stay, en right dar en den you 'll sholy fin' dat folks what git full er consate en proudness is gwine ter git it tuck out'n um. You kin see it gwine on right here 'fo' yo' eyes. Look at dat Yaller Jake. Miss Sally got 'im ter drive de carriage t'er Sunday, en 'fo' he got back home he done fergot dat his mammy wuz a nigger 'oman. He 'uz high up one day, en under de strap de nex'.

"Dat de way wid Brer Rabbit. Des 'bout

time he git it stuck in his min' dat dey ain't nobody kin outdo 'im, up somebody 'd jump en do 'im scan'lous. Dem what he ain't got in de cornder er his min', dey de ve'y ones what make 'im feel mighty umble-come-tumble.

"One time, when Brer Rabbit wuz feelin' like he 'uz high ez a poplar tree en big-aroun' ez a gin-house, he tuck a notion dat he want some bird eggs. Creeturs gits notions in der heads same ez folks does, en dat de kind er notion Brer Rabbit tuck up. Nothin 'll do but he mus' have some bird eggs. Dat de way he put it down. He bleedz ter have bird eggs.

"He got 'im a basket, he did, en hung it on his arm, en sot out ter hunt um. He tuck a nigh cut thoo de woods, en whiles he gwine 'long struttin' en hummin' one er deze yer sassy chunes, he come 'cross Miss Pa'tridge. You done hear 'bout Miss Pa'tridge, ain't you?" Uncle Remus asked, noting the little boy's look of surprise. "Mos' any day in de week, en Sunday flung in fer good medjer, you kin hear um hollerin' en axin' ole Bob White ef his peas mos' ripe, en will 'is dogs bite, speshul at night.

"Well, suh, whiles Brer Rabbit gwine 'long

huntin' bird eggs, he struck up wid' Miss Pa'tridge. She 'd done grabbled a hole in de hot san', en she wuz settin' in it, flingin' up de dust wid foot en wing.

"Atter dey 'd howdied, Brer Rabbit 'low, 'What make you waller in de dust?'

"Miss Pa'tridge say, 'I 'm tryin' ter git de freckles off. Where you gwine wid dat baskit?'

"Brer Rabbit 'low he huntin' bird eggs. Miss Pa'tridge ask 'im ef 't ain't bad manners ter rob bird-nesses. Brer Rabbit 'low he done hear talk 'bout it, but when a man git hongry, he can't stan' on manners. Dey jower'd, dey did, twel bimeby Miss Pa'tridge say dat ef Brer Rabbit is bent on robbin' bird-nesses, she 'd take en show 'im whar some wuz; en wid dat, off dey put, Miss Pa'tridge leadin' de way.

"Fust dey come whar dey wuz a nes' wid two big eggs in it. Brer Rabbit 'low, 'Dat ain't no bird-nes'. Dat's a hen-nes'.'

"Miss Pa'tridge wuz 'stonish'd. She say, 'Lawsy, Brer Rabbit, I hear tell dat hens lays mo' dan two eggs.'

"Dey went on, en bimeby dey come ter a Guinny-nes'. Miss Pa'tridge 'low, 'Dis is sho 'nuff bird-nes'.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Ain't you got no sense, 'oman? Dis is Pot Rack nes'. Lemme go 'head. I 'll fin' bird-nes'.'

"Brer Rabbit lead de way right spang ter Miss Pa'tridge nes'. Dis kinder flustrate de ole lady, but she say ter herse'f dat her nes' is so hid by de grass dat sholy Brer Rabbit won't be able ter fin' it. But Brer Rabbit got sharp eyes. He see whar de nes' is, but he sorter snuffle 'roun' en make like he huntin' it.

"He 'low, 'Look like I smell bird-egg.'

"Miss Pa'tridge laugh en fan 'erse'f wid a heart-leaf, en say, 'How de name er goodness kin anybody smell bird-egg?'

"Brer Rabbit 'low, 'I 'll show you;' en wid dat he unkivered de nes', en dar 't wuz wid in 'bout a hatful er eggs piled up in it.

"Miss Pa'tridge make a great 'miration. She say, 'Lawsy, yes! you kin smell um, Brer Rabbit, en who 'd a thunk it?'

"Brer Rabbit start ter put um in his basket, but Miss Pa'tridge sorter dance 'roun', she did, en say, 'Wait, Brer Rabbit, you better lemme see ef dey er good, kaze I done fergit mo' 'bout bird-eggs dan you ever know'd.'

"Wid dat Miss Pa'tridge break one uv um

en tas'e it, en, man, suh! she ain't mo' 'n git it in 'er mouf 'fo' she fell over backerds, en had de wuss kinder fit. You done see chickens wid der head chop off. Well, Miss Pa'tridge done wuss'n dat. She flewed up, en fell down en flutter, en scramble 'roun' in de leaves twel Brer Rabbit 'gun ter git skeered. When Miss Pa'tridge ud sorter flutter to'rds him, he 'd jump back en shake his foots like a cat does when she git water on um, en he feel so funny he 'd whirl 'roun' en shake hisse'f when a piece er grass tickle 'im on de leg.

"When Miss Pa'tridge kin ketch 'er breff, she squall out, 'Run, Brer Rabbit, run! Dey er snake eggs. Run, Brer Rabbit, run! Dey er rank pizen!'

"When Brer Rabbit hear dis, I let you know he put out fum dar like de dogs wuz atter 'im. Miss Pa'tridge went off in de bushes en made anudder nes', en tuck her eggs dar, en sot down on um en res' 'erse'f; en sometimes when she 'd be noddin' she 'd wake up en laugh at de way she fool ole Brer Rabbit.

"Maybe you 'll be a-tellin' dis tale some er dese days," Uncle Remus went on, beaming down on the little boy, "en some un 'll whirl in en 'spute it. When dat de case, you des ax

um ter go whar Miss Pa'tridge got 'er nes' en see ef she don't do des' like she done when she fool Brer Rabbit. She seed how it work den, en she done tell all 'er chilluns dat dat de bes' way ter do. En den, 'pon top er dat, you ax um ef dey ever hear er Brer Rabbit huntin' bird-eggs sence dat time. Des ax um dat, en I boun' dey won't 'spute yo' word no mo' atter dat."

"Well, Uncle Remus," said the little boy, "why does n't Brother Rabbit hunt bird eggs?"

"Kaze he skeer'd he 'll git pizened," responded the old man promptly.

VIII.

BROTHER FOX "SMELLS SMOKE."

ONE day the little boy was going through the negro quarters yelling at the top of his voice, repeating the refrain of a nonsense song he had heard the plough-hands sing.

"*High, my lady! Brinjer, ho.*"

When he came near Uncle Remus's house, the old man called out: —

"Heyo dar? Who dat?"

"Me! It 's me-me! Brinjer, ho!"

"Well, I 'clar ter gracious I 'm glad er dat. I low'd maybe it uz ole Brer Rabbit gwine by sellin' mustard poultices. You holler des like 'im."

This, of course, was a challenge to the little boy to ask for a story, and he accepted it at once.

"Shoo!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, after he had teased the youngster awhile. "I done tol' you dat tale too long ago ter fergit about."

But the little boy protested so seriously that

STAIRWAY FROM MAIN HALL, WREN'S NEST

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the old man settled himself back in his chair and began.

"Well, one time dey wuz a man, en dish yer man had a farm. He had pigs, en he had chickens, en he had ducks. He wuz gwine on farmin', en raisin' pigs en ducks en chickens, twel bimeby, one day, he miss a pig. He ain't say nothin', en nex' day he miss a chicken. Still he ain't say nothin', en de nex' day atter he miss a duck.

"Den he 'low, 'Hi! what kinder doin's is dis?'

"He study 'bout it, en den he fix 'im up a trap, en put a pig in it, en set it out by de hoss lot. He ain't cotch nothin', but he see tracks 'roun' de trap.

"He 'low, 'Hey! Dish yer look like Brer Fox been foolin' 'roun' here. I know 'im, kase de holler er his foot makes a hole in de groun.'

"Den he tuck de pig out en put a chicken in de trap. Nex' mornin' he went out, he did, en, sho' nuff, dar wuz Brer Fox settin' in dar 'long wid some chicken fedders, en he look mighty umble-come-tumble.

"De man look at de fedders, en 'low, 'I glad you brung yo' bed wid you, kaze you 'd a slep' hard ef you had n't.'

"Brer Fox, he talk mighty polite. He 'low, 'I wish you please, suh, turn me out. I wuz passin' by las' night on my way home fum de dance, en I heard a chicken hollerin', en flutterin', en I come in fer ter see what de matter. When I got in, de chicken wuz done gone, en den de door shot tight, en here I hat ter stay.'

"Man say, 'Ef dat chicken wuz ter holler now, I boun' he 'd skeer you.'

"Brer Fox 'low, 'How come?'

"Man say, ''Kaze he so close ter you.'

"Man got 'im a rope en tied Brer Fox hard en fas'. He tied all his foots tergedder, en den he tuck Brer Fox home en hung 'im up on a nail in de wall, en tole his ole 'oman dat she mus' watch 'im twel he come home. Den de man went ter work in de fiel'.

"De man's wife, she watch en watch whiles she shelled peas. Den she 'd go en stir de stew in de pot, en come back en watch, en shell mo' peas.

"Bimeby, Brer Fox say, 'Look like you got a mighty heap er peas dar.'

"De 'oman 'low, 'Laws a massy, yes! A heap here, en a heap mo' ter come! Han's in de fiel' got ter be fed. Lawsy, yes! A whole passel er peas, en mo' ter come!'

"Brer Fox say, 'Ef you 'll take me down en ontie me, I 'll shell dem peas fer you, whiles you er fixin' de rest er de dinner. Den you kin tie me up ag'in en hang me on de nail.'

"De 'oman, she shuck 'er head, but she keep on studyin' 'bout it. Brer Fox, he keep on a-talkin', en he talk so saf' en he talk so smart dat de 'oman put it down in 'er min' dat he ain't bad ez dey say he is. Den she tuck Brer Fox down en ontied 'im, en he lit in ter shellin' peas des ez hard ez he kin. He kep' one eye on de 'oman, en de 'oman she kep' one eye on him. De 'oman stirred de stew in de pot, en Brer Fox, he fumble wid de peas. De 'oman, she sif' de meal, en Brer Fox, he fumble wid de peas.

"Hit went on dis away, twel bimeby Brer Fox make a break fer de door, but de 'oman 'uz too quick fer 'im. She slam de do', she did, en chase Brer Fox 'roun' de room wid a battlin-stick, en she push 'im so close dat he bleedz ter run up de chimbley. Man, suh! dey wuz trouble den ef dey never wuz none befo'! When Brer Fox light up de chimbley he turned de pot er stew over, en put out de fier, en scald de 'oman. She gun a squall, she did, but Brer Fox done gone!

"'T wan't long fo' de man en de fiel' han's come home fer ter git der dinner, en when dey fin' dey ain't no dinner dar, den dey wuz a rippit. De man, he jower en jower, en de 'oman, she tuck'n cry, twel bimeby she flew mad, en den she sot in ter jowerin', en she outjowered de man. She ax 'im how come he ain't kill Brer Fox while he had 'im, stidder bringin' 'im dar whar he kin cut up his didos, en spile de dinner, en scald her all on de foots, en ruin her shoes, en put out de fier? De man can't say nothin'; he des hush up en go long 'bout his business, hongry dough he mought be."

"Well, Uncle Remus," said the little boy, as the old man closed his eyes and leaned back his head against his chair, "did the man catch Brother Fox?"

"De man ain't ketch 'im, but he got kotch. When de man lef' his ole 'oman a-jowerin' en a-jawin' at 'im, he went out in de pastur, en sot on de fence. He sot dar, he did, en he feel mighty bad. He done plum outdone. He le'nt his head on his han', en do like somebody got de jaw-ache.

"On top er de hill, not so mighty fur fum dar, wuz de place whar Brer Rabbit live at.

He see de man come out en set on de fence, en he watch 'im. De man still set dar, en Brer Rabbit crope little closer, en watch 'im. Bimeby Brer Rabbit come out de bushes en ax de man what de matter. De man up en tell 'im; en den ole Brer Rabbit laugh, en say he ain't know Brer Fox wuz so sassy en spry. He 'low, 'I speck I 'll hatter take 'im down a peg or two. He been fightin' shy er me dis long time. I feard he bin studyin' up some bran new tricks.'

"Den Brer Rabbit ax de man how much he 'll gi' 'im ef he 'll make Brer Fox feel sorry en sore on account er his prank. De man say he 'll let Brer Rabbit grabble in his goober patch, en nibble de cabbage des ez much ez he want ter.

"Brer Rabbit 'low, 'En you won't sic de dog on me?'

"Man say, 'I won't sic de dog on you.'

"Brer Rabbit 'low, 'It 's a bargain.'

"Den ole Brer Rabbit begin fer ter commence fer ter rope Brer Fox in. He tell de man he mus' have some chicken gizzuds. Man went en got um. Den Brer Rabbit wen' back on de hill whar he live at, en got his wallet en his walkin' cane. In de wallet

he put de chicken gizzuds, en on his walkin' cane he hung de wallet. Den he went out fer ter take a walk.

"He ain't gone so mighty fur 'fo' he see Brer Fox gwine 'long sniffin' de a'r en trottin' wid his head up like a blin' hoss. Brer Rabbit hail Brer Fox, an ax 'im whar he gwine. Brer Fox 'spon' dat he ain't gwine nowhars in 'tic'lar, en he ax wharbouts Brer Rabbit gwine wid his walkin' cane en wallet. Brer Rabbit 'spon' dat he huntin' fer somebody fer ter he'p 'im move in some hay. All dis time Brer Fox wuz walkin' 'roun' en 'roun' sniffin' de a'r.

"Bimeby, he up'n 'low, 'Brer Rabbit, I b'lieve in my soul I smell chicken gizzuds.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'I 'speck you does, Brer Fox, kaze I got um right here in my wallet.'

"Den Brer Fox jaw begun ter trimble, en he fair dribble at de mouf, kaze ef dey is anything on de topper side er de yeth what he love mo' dan anudder, 't is chicken gizzuds.

"He 'low, 'How many is you got, Brer Rabbit?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Some'rs 'twixt sev'm en 'lev'm.'

"Brer Fox 'low, 'What you gwine do wid um, Brer Rabbit?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'I gwine gi' um ter de man what he'ps me wid my hay.'

"Brer Fox jump up in de a'r, he did, en 'low, 'Show me de hay, Brer Rabbit! Show me de hay! I'm de man what kin move it.'

"So Brer Rabbit start back de way he come, en Brer Fox went 'long wid 'im. Brer Fox trot 'long on de side whar de wallet wuz, en one time he went ter look in it, but Brer Rabbit too smart fer dat.

"He 'low, 'You kin look at um when you done yearned um, en not a blessed minnit sooner.'

"Well, 't wan't long 'fo' dey come ter whar de pile er hay wuz. Brer Fox ax Brer Rabbit what he gwine do wid all dat dry grass, en Brer Rabbit say he gwine ter feed his cow wid some, en some he gwineter stuff in his bed tick. Dey sorter palaver'd, dey did, but bimeby Brer Fox he got a good big turn er de ruffage on his back, en start up de hill. Brer Rabbit tuck out his flint en steel en struck it on de hay.

"Brer Fox 'low, 'What dat?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Cricket hollerin'.'

"Den de grass 'gun ter crackle en blaze, en Brer Fox 'low, 'What dat?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Grasshopper singin'.'

"Brer Fox, he mozey 'long, he did, en bimeby he 'low, 'I smell smoke.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Somebody burnin' de new groun'.'

"Atter while, Brer Fox 'low, 'I feel mighty hot.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Wedder monst'us warm.'

"'T wan't long 'fo' de hay burn down en Brer Fox, he fetched one squall en jump out fum under it. He twis', he turn, he roll, he jump, but 't ain't do no good, en den he make a break fer de creek. De ha'r done burnt off'n his back, en de hide blistered. Dat what he git fer tryin' ter steal fum de man, en fer turnin' over de pot er stew, stidder waitin' twel he got a good chance ter go out de door. Ef he 'd 'a' done dat, he 'd 'a' saved his manners en his hide too."

"I think," said the little boy, as Uncle Remus paused to fill his pipe, "that Brother Rabbit was very cruel."

"Shoo, honey," exclaimed the old man. "You might talk dat away 'bout folks, but creeturs, — well, folks is folks en creeturs is creeturs, en you can't make um needer mo' ner less."

IX.

BROTHER FOX STILL IN TROUBLE.

Uncle Remus sat and smoked his pipe reflectively for some time after the little boy had criticised the heartlessness of the "creeturs." When he spoke, he showed that he had been thinking the matter over. He took the pipe from his mouth and blew a cloud of smoke in the air.

"Uh-uh!" he exclaimed, "'t ain't no use er talkin'. Creeturs is creeturs. You er what you is, en you can't be no is-er; I 'm what I am en I can't be no am-er. It all done been fix, en I ain't see nobody yit what kin onfix it. Creeturs is natchally got ha'sh idees, en you may take notice: wharsomever you see ha'r en bristles, right dar you er mo' dan ap' ter fin' claws en tushes. Hit 's des like I tell you, honey!

"You flung me off'n de track, but I ain't done wid dat fuss twix Brer Rabbit en Brer Fox. You sorter flinch'd kaze Brer Rabbit

tuck en burnt a blister on Brer Fox back, en it sot me ter studyin'; but we ain't come ter de wuss. Ef you er too tetchy fer ter set dar whiles I runs on, you kin des go up ter de big house en watch Sis Tempy fret over dat churn. I hear 'er quoilin' now."

The only reply the little boy made was to settle himself more firmly on the split-bottom chair in which he was sitting. Seeing which, the old man continued: —

"Now, den, what do Brer Rabbit do atter he scorch Brer Fox? Do he go off some'rs en set down en mope, kaze Brer Fox rushed out fum under de burnin' straw? Ef you t'ink he gwine do dat away, you mighty much mistaken. He des ez restless ez he yever is been. He move 'bout en he work his min', he jump 'roun' en study.

"He got 'im a string er red pepper, en he stewed it down wid some hog fat en mutton suet. Den he pick out de pepper, en when de fat en de suet git col' he tuck'n spread de salve on a long piece er rag. He tuck dis rag, he did, en put it in his wallet, en den he got down his walkin' cane, en went down de road to'rds de place whar Brer Fox live at. He ain't gone so mighty fur 'fo' he see Brer Fox

settin' down nussin' hisse'f. Time he see 'im Brer Rabbit 'gun ter holler: —

"'N'yam! n'yam! 'Intment fer swellin's! Salve fer burns en blisters! N'yam, n'yam!'

"He kep' a-hollerin' dis away des loud ez he kin. He hol' his head up like he ain't see Brer Fox, en he wuz gwine on by, but Brer Fox call 'im. Brer Rabbit look at 'im, but he ain't stop. Den Brer Fox call 'im ag'in. Den Brer Rabbit stop en look mighty hard.

"He holler back: 'What you want 'long er me? Ef 't wan't kaze you got de impidence er Ole Scratch hisse'f, you would n't dast ter have de face ter hail me whiles I gwine 'long 'tendin' ter my own business. Talk quick! I ain't got no time fer ter fool wid yo' sort!'

"Den Brer Fox ax' 'im what he so mighty mad 'bout, en Brer Rabbit 'low, 'Look how you done me 'bout dat hay. Ain't you say you gwine ter fetch it on top er de hill fer me?'

"Brer Fox look 'stonish. He say, 'Name er goodness, Brer Rabbit! You see wid yo' own eyes what de reason I can't fetch it up dar. Look at my back, what got a blister on it fum de top er my head plum to de een er my tail! I des like ter see de man what kin tote grass when she git dat hot.'

"Brer Rabbit look at Brer Fox back, en he make a great 'miration. He 'low, 'She sho wuz hot, Brer Fox, en you got de marks un it. I des tuck a notion you wuz playin' off one er yo' pranks on me, en my feelin's wuz hurted.'

"Brer Fox say, 'I hear you gwine on by hollerin' 'bout some kind er 'intment er nuther what 'll pacify burns, en dat what make I holler at you.'

"Wid dat Brer Rabbit went down in his wallet en fotch out de red-pepper salve, en say ter Brer Fox dat he mus' git his ole 'oman fer ter spread de plarster on de place des soon ez he kin. Brer Fox tuck it en wobble off home des fas' ez he kin. Brer Rabbit, he foller 'long out er sight, en hide in de bushes whar he kin see en hear what gwine on.

"Well, suh, 't wan't long 'fo' Brer Rabbit hear Brer Fox fetch a squall, en he shot out'n de house, en in 'bout sev'm jumps he landed in de creek, dough de creek wuz mo' 'n a half mile off. Foxes is skeer'd er water, same ez cats, but dat ar fox, he des roll en waller in de water. Brer Rabbit still foller atter, en when he git whar he kin see Brer Fox, he des sot down en hol' his han's on his side fer ter keep fum bustin' de buttons off'n his wescut wid laughin'.

"Bimeby he holler out, 'Gracious goodness, Brer Fox! what de matter? Is dat de way you goes a-fishin'?'

"Brer Fox say: 'I 'm ruint, Brer Rabbit! You done ruint me! Dat er stuff you gi' me is right rank pizen!'

"Brer Rabbit open his wallet, en look in it. Den he 'low: 'Sholy I ain't gun you de wrong physic! Lawsy! yes I is! Stidder de n'yam-n'yam 'intment, I done gone en gun you de n'yip-n'yip plarster. I b'lieve 'n my soul I 'm a-losin' my sev'm senses!'

"Den he sorter fell back in de bushes en like ter kill hisse'f laughin'. Ef ole Brer Fox could er seed Brer Rabbit rollin' 'bout in de leaves en makin' de trash fly, he 'd 'a' made sho dat he done gone en got some er de n'yip-n'yip plarster on hisse'f."

"What do n'yam-n'yam and n'yip-n'yip mean, Uncle Remus?" inquired the youngster.

"Hit's des de name er de physic, I speck. You know yo'se'f what quare names doctors is got fer der truck. Dars ippygag, en jollup, en bone-set, en burdock, en one thing en ernudder. De names tas'e bitter, let 'lone de truck."

"Well, Uncle Remus, what became of Brother Fox?"

"Ef you er anyways tetchy, honey, you better put yo' finger in yo' years, kaze de tale gits wuss en wuss. 'T ain't nothin' but trouble 'pon top er trouble for Brer Fox. You done got yo' ears plugged? Well, den, atter so long a time, Brer Fox got well er de burn en de blister, en he went on 'bout his business same ez any udder creetur. He wuz gwine 'long by de river bank one day, en he hear a mighty hammerin' not fur off, en he say ter hisse'f dat he b'lieve he 'll go see what all de fuss wuz 'bout. He went 'long, he did, en, bless gracious! who should he see but Brer Rabbit wid his coat off en his sleeves rolled up, hammerin' en nailin'; en nailin' en hammerin'.

"Brer Fox 'low, 'What you doin' dar, Brer Rabbit?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Des makin' a boat, Brer Fox.'

"Brer Fox 'low, 'What you want wid a boat, Brer Rabbit?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Ter go ter my fish-traps in.'

"Brer Fox look 'roun', en see planks en scantlin's a-lyin' 'roun', en he make up his min' dat he ain't gwine ter go ter all dat

trouble des fer de sake er one little boat. So he set on de bank en fight san'flies en skeeters, en watch Brer Rabbit make his boat. En he ain't had ter wait long nudder, kaze Brer Rabbit, dough he wuz light in de body, wuz mighty handy, en he got his boat ready in a little er no time. Den he got in it en paddle up de river, en 't wan't long 'fo' here he come back wid a long string er fish.

"Dis make Brer Fox dribble at de mouf, kaze ef dey 's any kinder vittles what he like mo' dan any udder kind, it 's fish. So he make up his min' dat he bleedz ter have a boat. Den he ax Brer Rabbit ef a mud boat won't do des good ez any yuther kind, en Brer Rabbit make answer dat while mud boats might suit some folks, dey don't suit him.

"Brer Fox ain't got de knack er makin' plank boats, en so he say ter hisse'f dat he gwine ter show Brer Rabbit dat some folks know a thing er two ez well ez yuther folks. Wid dat, he whirl in, en make 'im a boat out 'n clay, en when it done got dry in de sun, he shove it out in de water en jump in wid his paddle.

"Brer Rabbit wuz dar wid his plank boat,

fer ter see it well done, en when Brer Fox start, he start too. Well, suh, hit 's des like I tell you! Brer Fox ain't hit many licks wid his paddle 'fo' de mud 'gun ter melt; de boat went down, en dar wuz ole Brer Fox a scufflin' in de water. Atter so long a time he got back ter de bank, but I let you know he ain't make no mo' boats, needer mud boats nor plank boats."

X.

WHY BROTHER FOX'S LEGS ARE BLACK.

"HONEY," said Uncle Remus, shaking the ashes from his pipe by tapping it gently on the hearthstone, "how long sence you seed a fox?"

"Why, don't you know papa brought two home not very long ago?"

"Dat wuz las' fall," suggested Uncle Remus. "One wuz a red en tudder one wuz a gray. Ain't you notice how der legs look?"

The child thought a moment. "Why, yes," he exclaimed. "Their legs were black."

"Now, den," said the old man, leaning back in his chair and looking wise, "how come dat? Dar dey wuz — one fox red en tudder fox gray, en yit der legs black. I wish you 'd please, suh, be so good en so kind, ef you got der time ter spar', ter tell me how come dey bofe got black legs?" Uncle Remus's tone was that of a humble seeker after knowledge,

and his earnestness was comic indeed, though it seemed to the child to be properly serious.

"I never thought of that," said the little boy. "I can ask papa."

Uncle Remus gave a derisive snort, and shut his mouth with a snap, and began to hum a tune through his nose. It was a sure sign of displeasure.

"Well, Uncle Remus," said the child in a penitent tone, "I thought you wanted to know sure enough. And, anyhow, if you don't, I do."

"Go ax yo' pa," exclaimed Uncle Remus. "Go ax 'im. Ole nigger man like me don't know nothin'. Go ax yo' pa."

"You tell me," said the child coaxingly. "If papa knows, he 's too busy to tell me right now."

"He 'll never tell you in de roun' worl'," remarked Uncle Remus emphatically. "He dunner no mo' 'bout it dan de man in de moon — ef dey's any man dar; en ef dey ain't no man dar, he dunno no mo' 'bout it dan de man what ain't dar."

Then the old negro made a pretense of changing the conversation, but this the little boy would n't hear to.

"Well," Uncle Remus said, after awhile,

"ef I don't tell you, you 'll pester me twel I does tell you, en so what de odds? 'T ain't no great tale nohow, en so I des might ez well out wid it, en git some peace er mind.

"One time Brer Rabbit en Brer Fox went out in de woods huntin', en atter so long a time, dey 'gun ter git hongry. Leas' ways Brer Fox did, kaze Brer Rabbit had brung a ashcake in his wallet, en eve'y time he got a chance he 'd eat a mou'ful — eve'y time Brer Fox 'd turn his back, Brer Rabbit 'd nibble at it. Well, endurin' er de day, Brer Fox 'gun ter get mighty hongry. Dey had some game what dey done kill, but dey wuz a fur ways fum home, en dey ain't had no fier fer ter cook it.

"Dey ain't know what ter do. Brer Fox so hongry it make his head ache. Bimeby de sun gun ter git low, en it shine red thoo de trees.

"Brer Rabbit 'low, 'Yonder, whar you kin git some fier.'

"Brer Fox say, 'Wharbouts?'

"Brer Rabbit 'low, 'Down whar de sun is. She 'll go in her hole terrectly, en den you kin git a big chunk er fier. Des leave yo' game here wid me, en go git de fier. You er de biggest en de swiftest, en kin go quicker.

"Wid dat Brer Fox put out ter whar de

sun is. He trot, he lope, en he gallup, en bimeby he git dar. But by dat time de sun done gone down in her hole en de groun', fer ter take a night's rest, en Brer Fox he can't git no fier. He holler en holler, but de sun ain't pay no 'tention. Den Brer Fox git mad en say he gwine ter stay dar twel he gits some fier. So he lay down topper de hole, en 'fo' he knowed it he drapt asleep. Dar he wuz, en dar whar he got kotch.

"Now you know mighty well de sun bleedz ter rise. Yo' pa kin tell you dat. En when she start ter rise, dar wus Brer Fox fas' asleep right 'pon topper de hole whar she got ter rise fum. When dat de case, sump'n n'er bleedz ter happen. De sun rise up, en when she fin' Brer Fox in de way, she het 'im up en scorch his legs twel dey got right black. Dey got black, en dey er black ter dis ve'y day."

"What became of Brother Rabbit?" the little boy asked.

Uncle Remus laughed, or pretended to laugh, until he bent double.

"Shoo, honey," he exclaimed, when he could catch his breath, "time Brer Fox got out'n sight, Brer Rabbit tuck all de game en put out fer home. En dar whar you better go yo'se'f."

XI.

WHY BROTHER BULL GROWLS AND GRUMBLES.

One day as Uncle Remus, assisted by the little boy, was sorting out shucks and dampening them, for the purpose of making horse-collars, a big red bull went along the public road. He held his head down, and every few steps he gave forth a low, rumbling bellow. Uncle Remus looked at the bull, and then at the little boy, and then shook his head solemnly.

"You hear dat, don't you? You hear dat creetur, gwine 'long out dar, growlin' en grumblin' en complainin' ter hisse'f? Well, he got a mighty good reason fer gwine on dat away; but who 'll tell you? You may spit on yo' thumb en turn over de leaves er all de books up dar in Marse John's liberry, yit you won't fin' out in um. You may ax Marse John, you may ax Miss Sally, you may ax a preacher, yit; but none un um 'll ever tell you. Den who kin tell you? Me! Ole

Man Remus, de nigger what smell cake en yit can't git none!"

The little boy laughed, and drew forth from his pocket a slice of cake. The old man's features lost something of their severity, as he took the cake and placed it on the plank that served as a mantel.

"I 'll lay er up dar," he remarked, "twel I 'gin ter feel a cravin' in my gizzud. Now, den, lemme see: what pint wuz we 'sputin' 'bout? We want 'sputin' 'bout deze shucks, en we wan't 'sputin' 'bout no plain corn-bread. I 'clar ter gracious! De sight er cake natchally drives eve'ything else out'n my head."

"Why, Uncle Remus! You were talking about the bull that went along the road just now," said the little boy.

"Tooby sho'!" exclaimed the old man. "Look like a bull is too big fer ter be driv' out'n my min' by a little piece er cake like dat, but dat des de way it come 'bout. Well, dat ar bull wuz gwine on by, grumblin' en a-growlin'. You wuz settin' right whar you could hear 'im wid yo' own years. Dat 'zackly what he wuz doin'. Time I hear 'im, it put me in min' er de time when ole Brer Bull change hisse'f inter a man en went 'roun'

courtin.' Whiles he wuz gwine on dis away, he come 'cross a 'oman which he like 'er looks mighty well, en seem like she like him.

"Well, suh, Brer Bull, he 'd graze' roun' in de pastur all night, en in de daytime he 'd turn ter be a man en call on de 'oman, en cas' sheep-eyes at 'er, en tell 'er right pine-blank how purty she is. Hit kep' on dis away twel bimeby de 'oman got so she can't do nothin' 't all widout runnin' over in 'er min' 'bout dish yer nice man what comin' courtin.' She can't skacely cook dinner. She 'd lif' de ladle fer ter stir de pot, in hol' it in de a'r a minnit, en den — *belingy-bang-dang!* — it 'd drap on de flo'. She can't keep 'way fum de lookin'-glass, a-breshin' 'er ha'r en plasterin' down 'er beau-ketchers.

"Now, den, dey wuz a little boy livin' dar wid de 'oman. He mought 'er been some bigger dan what you is, but he wan't no older. He wuz sharp ez a bamboo brier, en his foot wuz light en quick ez ole Brer Rabbit hisse'f. He watch mighty close. He notice dat when de man wuz courtin', dey wan't no Brer Bull in de pastur, en when dey wan't no man er courtin', dar wuz Brer Bull grazin' 'roun'. He got behime a 'simmon tree, de little boy did,

en watch how Brer Bull change hisse'f. He watch, en he see Brer Bull set down on his hunkers des like a dog. Den he 'd shake his head en say, '*Ballybaloo-bill!*' Wid dat his horns 'ud swink, en his tail 'ud swivel, en mos' 'fo' you kin bat yo' eye dar he 'd stan' change inter a man. Den de little boy 'ud slip back ter de house, en pick up chips fer ter put on de oven-lid ter bake bread.

"Bimeby de little boy got so oneasy dat he don't eat much. He wuz skeerd de 'oman gwine ter marry Brer Bull. En sho' 'nuff, dat des 'zactly what de 'oman laid off ter do. When de boy see dat, he des up'n tell de 'oman all 'bout it, but stidder believin' 'im, she got mad, en come nighty nigh snatchin' 'im bal'-headed. But de boy, he watch, en keep on watchin', en bimeby he hear what de man say when he change back inter Brer Bull.

"So, one day, whiles de man eatin' dinner at de 'oman house, de boy han' 'roun' de vittles, en when he come ter de man, he say, '*Billybaloo-bal!*' De man looked skeerd en put his han's up ter his head, but 't ain't do no good; he horns done 'gun ter grow, en hoofs come out on his han's en foots, en de cloze drap off, en mos' 'fo' de man kin git

LOOKING ACROSS SNAP BEAN FARM TO THE REAR OF WREN'S NEST

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out'n de door, he done change inter Brer Bull, en he curl his tail topper his back en rush out ter de pastur'.

"Well, de 'oman make 'umble 'polergy ter de boy, but he rub hisse'f in de naberhoods er de coat-tails, whar she spank 'im." The old man paused a moment, and then went on: "I been livin' 'roun' here a mighty long time, but I ain't never see no polergy what wuz poultice er plarster nuff fer ter swaje a swellin' er kyo a bruise. Now you des keep dat in yo' min' en git sorry 'fo' you hurt anybody. I been takin' notice deze many long years dat '*Did n't-go-ter-do-it*' is de ve'y chap what do it all."

"But, Uncle Remus," said the little boy, "what became of Brother Bull and the boy that found him out?"

"Well, I tell you," responded the old man, "dat boy wuz name Simmy-Sam, en he wuz mo' sharper dan what folks tuck 'im ter be. His common sense done tell 'im dat atter he make dat explosure 'bout Brer Bull he 'd hatter keep his wedder eye open. So he slip off ter whar his mammy live at, en she gun 'im a little bundle er flapjacks, en tol' 'im ter go back en 'ten' ter his business, en keep out'n Brer Bull's way.

"Ole Brer Bull wuz grazin' in de pastur' des like nothin' ain't happen, but he keep on de watch. When he 'd see Simmy-Sam anywhars out'n de yard, Brer Bull 'ud sorter feed to'rds 'im, but Simmy-Sam wan't takin' no chances, en he kep' close ter kivver. But creeturs is mo' patient-like dan what folks is, en bimeby it got so dat Simmy-Sam 'ud go furder en furder fum de house, en one day de 'oman sont 'im out in de woods atter some pine kindlin', en he got ter playin' en foolin' 'roun'. You know how chillun is, en how dey will do: well, dat des de way Simmy-Sam done. He des frolicked 'roun' out dar in de brush, twel bimeby he hear ole Brer Bull come a-rippin' en a-snortin' thoo de woods! Hit in about looked like his time wuz up."

"What did he do?" the little boy asked, as Uncle Remus paused to search in his pocket for some tobacco crumbs. The old man had a knack of holding the youngster in suspense at a critical point in a story.

"What he do? Well, suh, dar wuz Simmy-Sam, yonder wuz a tree, en here come Brer Bull. Now, in a case er dat kind, what Simmy-Sam gwine do? 'Fo' you kin ax de question, he des shinned up de tree like one er

deze yer rusty-back lizzuds. Brer Bull come up en hit de tree wid 'is horns — *kerblip!* But 't ain't do no good. He walk 'roun' en switch his tail en shake his head, but Simmy-Sam des laugh at 'im. Brer Bull back, he did, en hit de tree wid his horns — *kerblam!* 'T ain't do no good.

"He kep' on dis away twel he got plum tired, en den he stop ter res'. Atter he got his win' back, he sot down, he did, en change hisse'f inter a man, en de man had a axe. Den Simmy-Sam git skeerd, kaze he know dat when de axe start ter talk, dat tree got ter come down. De man look up, en sorter grin.

"He low, 'I got you, is I?'

"Simmy-Sam say, 'Yasser, I speck you is.'

"Man 'low, 'You better come down en save me de trouble er cuttin' down de tree.'

"Simmy-Sam say, 'I skeerd.'

"Man 'low, 'Skeerd er no skeerd, you better come down.'

"Simmy-Sam, 'Cut some fust, en lemme see how it feel.'

"Wid dat, de man let in ter cuttin' hard ez he kin — *blap! blip! blip! blap!* 'Bout dat time, Simmy-Sam, whiles he wuz feelin' in his pocket fer his hankcher so he kin wipe de water

out'n his eyes, come 'cross de little bundle er flapjacks what his mammy gi' 'im. He onroll de bundle, en dey wuz three un um in dar. He tuck one un um, he did, en drap it down on de man, en one er de man's arms fall off. De man ain't wait ter put de arm back on; he des tuck de ax in one han' en kep on choppin' hard ez he kin.

"Simmy-Sam see dis, en he mak 'ase en drap anudder flapjack. It no sooner drap dan de man's tudder arm fall off. Dar he wuz — ain't got no arms, en can't do no cuttin'. Look like nobody can be skeerd un 'im when he in dat kinder fix. But Simmy-Sam fear'd de man kin run at 'im en fall topper 'im. So den, ter make sho, he drapt de las' flapjack, en de man head fell off. Wid dat, Simmy-Sam clum down de tree, en tuck is foot in his han' en put out fer home."

"His foot in his hand, Uncle Remus?" The little boy was somewhat perplexed, and the familiar saying struck strangely on his ear.

"Shoo, honey! You done hear me say dat many en many 's de time. When anybody run fas', dey say he done tuck his foot in his han'."

"Did the man die?" the little boy inquired.

The old man laughed softly to himself, and looked at the eager face of the child.

"Why tooby sho' not! tooby sho' not! 'T wan't no man. Ole Brer Bull had des change hisse'f inter a man, en how kin it be a sho' 'nuff man? Atter Simmy-Sam done got out er sight, Brer Bull got his man parts ter-gidder des like a jinted snake does, en den he change hisse'f back ter his own se'f, en he done stay dat away, kaze he feard dat some little chap er nudder will come 'long en fling a battercake at 'im.

"En mo' dan dat, he bin gwine 'long fum dat day ter dis, holdin' his head down en growlin' en grumblin' like sump'n n'er done hurted his feelin's. En ef you 'll notice right close, he don't like fer no youngsters fer ter come foolin' 'roun' whar he stay at."

"What became of Simmy-Sam?" asked the little boy.

"He des grow'd up, I speck, like yuther chaps. He grow'd up en got ter huntin' wil' cattle, kaze Brer Bull sot 'im ag'in' all de cattle kin'. What he done en how he done it, I 'll tell you some er deze odd-come-shorts

when I ain't got time fer ter be ez busy ez I 'll hatter be fum dis on. I hear Miss Sally holler'n' atter you now. Ef she ax you whar you been en what you been doin', des tell 'er you been down here runnin' on wid de ole nigger."

XII.

THE MAN AND THE WILD CATTLE.

One day Uncle Remus saw the little boy going round the place with a bow and arrow, shooting at the chickens and everything that came in his way. The bow Uncle Remus had made himself, under protest, and he had also gathered a handful of reeds from the swamp and showed the enterprising youngster how to fashion them into arrows. The outfit was crude and clumsy enough, but it was used with such unexpected effect that the old man was compelled to interfere.

"I lay ef Miss Sally see you gwine on dis away, she 'll put dat er bow behime de chimbly, en she 'll take dem ar arrers en w'ar um out on you. I boun' I ain't gwine ter fix you up no mo' contraptions, ef dat de way you does — massycreein' de cats, en de chickens, en de Lord knows what!"

"Uncle Remus," said the little boy quite seriously, "don't you see I am a wild In-

dian?" He had a half-dozen feathers stuck in the band of his hat. The old man looked at the child and smiled, in spite of his efforts to assume an air of severity.

"What kinder Injuns is dem," he asked, "what goes a pursuin' atter chickens? Ef you er huntin' war, des go up yonder whar dat ar Dominicker hen got de young chickens; go up dar en 'sturb 'er, en ef she don't make you squall, de fust letter er my name ain't ole man Remus. Dey wuz a man one time what had a bow en arrers dat done 'im some good, but dat time gone by."

"Tell me about it, Uncle Remus," said the little boy.

"Oh, you ain't got time for dat!" responded the old man. "You er lots too busy! Go on en pursue atter de chickens en den atter de cats. Go on! ef you don't make 'aste dey 'll git away, en den de Injun man 'll hatter go widout his dinner. Go on, Injun!"

But the little boy put down his bow and arrows, and remained, and after awhile Uncle Remus told him the story.

"Well, suh, one time dey wuz a man, en he live close by a great big woods. Dey ain't no woods 'roun' here big ez what dat woods wuz.

Git on a swif' hoss en gallop 'im sev'm days en sev'm nights, en you 'd go ez fur ez de woods wus wide. Git on de same hoss and gallop 'im under whip en spur 'lev'm days en 'lev'm nights, en you 'd go ez fur ez de woods wuz long. De woods wuz full er horned creeturs, en in about all un um wuz cattle. Dey mought er been some deer 'mongst um, but de big run un um wuz horned cattle. Dey roamed 'roun' in de woods, crappin' de grass, en cuttin' up der capers. Dey ain't had no trouble 'bout nothin' 'ceppin' what de man brung um.

"Now, dish yer man, he hunt de cattle fer der hide en taller. He had a bow en arrer, en he had two big dogs, en de cattle what 'scape fum his bow en arrer he 'd ketch wid his dogs. Dey want no common run er dogs — dey wuz big ez a good size calf, — en dey wuz mo' servigrous dan a pant'er. Dey worried de horned creeturs constant. One on um wuz name" —

"Minny-Minny-Morack!" exclaimed the little boy, "and the other was named Follamalinska!"

"Lord-a-massy, honey!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, pretending to be astonished. "Who tole you dat?"

"Don't you know you told me about the little boy in the tree that called his dogs to kill the leopard woman?"

The old negro threw his head back and laughed. After awhile he went on.

"Well, suh, dat little boy what I been tell you 'bout, he grow'd up, en come ter be a hunter: en dem two dogs, dey grow'd 'long wid 'im, en dey got wuss dan dey wuz when dey kil't de 'oman — lots wuss. So he hunt de cattle, en de dogs kill um scan'lous.

"It went on dat away twel bimeby de wil' cattle helt a meetin' fer ter git up some kinder plan ter make way wid de man. De onliest way dey kin do is ter fix it so dey kin ketch de man by hisse'f. Dey study en study, but dey dunner how dey gwine ter fetch dat about. De dogs wuz in de way. Ef dey kin git de man by hisse'f, dey kin run in on 'im en hook 'im inter jiblets, but ef de dogs 'long wid 'im, den dey git kil't deyse'f. So dey study en study.

"Bimeby a nice young cow, white ez snow, say she gwine ter try a trick. She 'low she gwine ter change inter a young 'oman en make 'im marry 'er. Den she say she 'll swade 'im ter stay home long ez she kin, en when she can't swade 'im no longer, den she 'll take en

tie de dogs so dey can't go 'long wid 'im when he go huntin', en den de horned creeturs kin cloze in on 'im en make way wid 'im. De Brindle Cow shuck 'er head en 'low, 'Oh-ho!' en de Dun Cow switch 'er tail en 'low, 'Ah-ha!' en dat de way dey settle it.

"So den, de nex' time de man start fer ter go huntin', he come 'cross a young 'oman in de woods. She wuz a likely lookin' gal, mon! — des ez purty ez red shoes wid blue strings in um. De man he look at 'er, he did, en de gal, she look back at 'im, en den dey bofe look at one anudder."

"That was the white cow, was n't it, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy.

"Tooby sho' 't wuz, honey!" exclaimed the old man, warming up to the story; "'t wan't nobody else in de roun' worl'. She des went en change 'erse'f bodaciously fum a cow en come ter be a likely young 'oman. How she done it, I 'll never tell you, but de creeturs in dem days wuz des ez mischievious ez dey could be; dey wan't no eend ter der tricks. Des ter set here en chat about it, it don't seem like dat a cow kin change 'erse'f twel she come ter be a 'oman, but dar she wuz right 'fo' de man's two eyes, en how you gwine git roun' dat? Dat what I 'd like ter know!

"Now, den, dar wuz de likely young 'oman, en dar wuz de man. De 'oman, she hilt 'er head down like she 'shame; en de man, he stood dar, he did, en make sheep-eyes at 'er. Well, you know how 't is when folks do dat away. Atter 'while, de man, he sorter sidle up ter de young 'oman en ax 'er ef she 'll have 'im, en de young 'oman, she tuck'n chaw on 'er bonnet string, en 'low dat she ain't know nothin' contrary ter de question. Dat de way wimmin folks say, 'Yasser, en thanky too!' Den dey went off en got married, en de man took de young 'oman home, en dey sot up housekeepin'.

"De man sorter drapt his huntin' atter dat. Look like he sorter los' de appetite fer killin' de wil' cattle fer der hide en taller. His bow en arrer wuz put up on de shelf, en he stayed 'roun' de house. De dogs ain't know what ter make er dis; dey wonder en wonder what de matter is, en some days dey 'd stan' on de door-sill en look at de man en whine. All dis time de wil' cattle wuz roamin' in de woods, grazin', en cuttin' up der capers.

"Bimeby de man 'gun ter hone fer ter go huntin', en one night he tuck'n tol' de young 'oman dat he bleedz ter go huntin' de nex'

day. So, 'fo' day de nex' mornin', de' oman went out en tied de dogs hard en fas', en den crope back ter bed. De man, he got up, he did, en fried him a rasher er meat, en drapt a pone er cornbread in his wallet, en den he put out fer ter hunt de wil' cattle. He ain't pay no 'tention ter de dogs, kaze he been in de habits er gwine a-huntin' widout 'em, en when he need um right bad, he 'd des holler en call um. No matter how fur off he mought be, he 'd des put his han' ter his mouf en holler: —

"'Minny-Minny Morack! Follamalinska! Here, boys, here!'

"Some er de wil' cattle seed 'im a-comin', en dey went en tole de yuthers, en den de whole drove tuck ter der heels en made off ez hard ez dey could. De man follow'd der tracks, en dis wuz 'zackly what dey want. Dey wanter toll de man des ez fur in de woods ez dey kin. Bimeby he come on um in one er deze yer big open places, like de clay galls you see in a pine thicket. Dar de wil' cattle tuck der stan', en dey wuz so many un um it look like dey fair swarmed all over de face er de yeth.

"Den de man draw'd his bow en let fly his

arrers, en called his dogs ez loud ez he could. He lissen fer de dogs, but de mo' he lissen de mo' he ain't hear um, en he keep shootin' at de cattle en callin' de dogs, twel he ain't got but three arrers lef'. Den de wil' cattle put der heads down en histed der tails in de a'r, en come er rushin' at 'im same ez a harry-cane. De big ole bulls 'low, '*Oo-hoo! Now we got you!*' en de cows dey holler, '*Ma-hah! Now we git yo' hide en taller!*'

"But des 'bout dat time de man tuck one er de arrers what he got lef' en stuck it in de groun', en 'fo' you kin say Jack Robinson wid' yo' mouf open, de arrer grow'd to be a great big tree, wid de man straddlin' de top lim's. Dis make de wil' cattle feel 'stonish, en den dey got mad en run at de tree en hook it twel der horns got sore. Den dey pawed up de groun' en beller, des like de cows does when dey smell fresh beef blood. But 't ain't do no good, — dar de tree wuz, en dar she stood.

"Den some er de wil' cattle put out en got some axes, en 'gun ter cut de tree down, en it look like mighty skeery times fer de man.

"Settin' in de top er de tree, he call his dogs, '*Minny-Minny Morack! Follamalinska! Here, boys, here!*'

"Down at de bottom er de tree de wil' cattle dey chop en chop, '*Blam! blip-blip-blam! Blip-blip-blam! blam! Blam-blam-blam! Blip-blip-blam!*'

"Co'se no tree can't stan' dat kinder doin's, en dis un 'gun ter git shaky. De man call de dogs, en dey ain't come! De axes call de tree, en bimeby down she come! Time she struck de groun' de man stuck anudder arrer in de groun', en up it grow'd bigger dan tudder one.

"De man he call his dogs, '*Minny-Minny Morack! Follamalinska! Here, boys, here!*'

"De axes dey call on de tree, '*Down! down! Dip-dip-down! Down-dip! Dip-down! Dippy-dip! Dippy-down!*'

"De dogs ain't come, but de tree come, en de man des had time fer ter stick his onliest arrer in de groun' 'fo' de wil' cattle swarmed in on 'im. De arrer grow'd up bigger en bigger dan de yuthers. In de top de man sot en call de dogs louder en louder, en at de butt de wil' cattle cut harder en harder.

"Now all dis time, de dogs hear de man callin', en dey pull at de ropes en tug at um hard ez dey kin, but de ropes big en strong.

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De man, he call, en de dogs, dey tug. Bimeby dey sot in ter gnyawin', en des 'fo' de las' tree fell dey gnyaw'd de ropes in two. Man, suh! When dey did git loose, dey des come a callyhootin'! De man hear um comin', en he call louder. De wil' cattle hear um comin', en dey cut harder.

"De man call, '*Minny-Minny Morack! Follamalinska! Come, boys, come!*'

"De axes talk, '*Tree-down! Tree-down! Trip-trip-tree-down!*'

"Bimeby, des ez de tree come down *ker-blashity-blam!* de dogs rush'd up. De man sik't um on, en dey wuz so mad dat dey stroy'd mighty nigh all de wil' cattle. Atter dey done kil't all dey could, de man seed a snow white cow layin' mongst de res'. De hide wuz so nice dat he save it fer hisse'f.

"He went back home, but his wife done gone, en he ain't never see 'er twel dis day. He ain't know nothin' 'tall 'bout de white cow."

XIII.

BROTHER RABBIT FRIGHTENS BROTHER TIGER.

"'T AIN'T de biggest en de strongest dat does de mostest in dis world," said Uncle Remus one day, when he and the little boy were talking over matters and things in general. The little boy had been talking about the elephant and the tiger which he had seen in a traveling menagerie, and he had asked the old man why the elephant was so strong and the tiger so fierce.

"No, honey, don't let nobody fool you 'bout dat. De cuckle-burr got needer life ner lim', yit when it git in de sheep wool it kin travel fast ez de sheep, you know dat yo'se'f. De elephen' may be strong; I speck he is; en de tiger maybe servigrous ez dey say he is; but Brer Rabbit done outdone bofe un um."

"How was that, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked.

"Well, he done it so easy, honey, dat 't ain't

skacely no tale. 'T ain't nothin' dat 'll 'ston ish you, en 't ain't nothin' dat 'll make you laugh. Hit 's des some er Brer Rabbit's eve'y-day doin's, des like you 'd set down ter eat a plain dinner er pot-liquor en dumplin's. wid no pie fer ter take de greasy tas'e out'n yo' mouf."

The youngster wanted to hear about it anyhow, and he said so. Whereupon Uncle Remus continued : —

"One time, whiles Brer Rabbit wuz gwine 'long thoo de woods, he struck up wid Brer Tiger. 'T wan't nowhars 'bout here, honey," explained the old man, observing the child's look of astonishment. "'T wuz in some er de 'jinin' counties. Brer Rabbit struck up wid Brer Tiger, he did, en atter dey passed de time er day, dey went amblin' 'long ter-gedder. Brer Rabbit talk so big en walk so uppity dat Brer Tiger look at 'im sideways en grin. Bimeby dey come ter whar der wuz a creek, en dey want no foot-log in sight. Brer Tiger ain't want ter wet his feet no mo' dan a cat do, en needer do Brer Rabbit, en so dey went up de creek huntin' fer a foot-log. Dey go, en go, but dey ain't fin' none.

"Bimeby Brer Rabbit 'low he know how

ter cross. Brer Tiger ax 'im how. Den Brer Rabbit grab a grape-vine hangin' fum de tree lim', en tuck a runnin' start en swung hisse'f on tudder side. When he tu'n de vine loose, it flew back ter whar Brer Tiger wuz, en Brer Tiger he cotch holt en made fer ter swing hisse'f 'cross. Time he done lef' de groun' good, de vine broke, en he come down on his back in de creek, *kersplash!*

"Co'se dis make 'im feel bad, en when he crawl'd out en shuck hisse'f, en see Brer Rabbit settin up dar, dry en clean, a-laughin' fit ter kill, hit make 'im feel wuss. He fetched er growl er two, en popped his mouf tergedder, but Brer Rabbit kep' one eye on 'im.

"Brer Tiger 'low, 'How come you ain't skeer'd er me, Brer Rabbit? All de yuther creeturs run when dey hear me comin'.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'How come de fleas on you ain't skeer'd un you? Dey er lots littler dan what I is.'

"Brer Tiger 'low, 'Hit 's mighty good fer you dat I done had my dinner, kaze ef I 'd a-been hongry I 'd a-snapped you up back dar at de creek.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Ef you 'd done dat,

you 'd er had mo' sense in yo' hide dan what you got now.'

"Brer Tiger 'low, 'I gwine ter let you off dis time, but nex' time I see you, watch out!'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Bein 's you so monst'us perlite, I 'll let you off too, but keep yo' eye open nex' time you see me, kaze I 'll git you sho.'

"Brer Rabbit talk so biggity dat Brer Tiger put on his studyin' cap, en he make up his min' dat dey ain't room 'nuff in dat county fer bofe him en Brer Rabbit. Brer Tiger turn 'roun', he did, en watch Brer Rabbit go tippin' off, en he look so little en so sassy dat it make Brer Tiger mad. Hit make 'im so mad dat he kotch holt uv a tree en clawed mos' all de bark off'n it. Bless gracious! de furder he git fum Brer Rabbit, de mo' madder he got. He des declar' dat de nex' time he strike up wid Brer Rabbit he gwine ter gobble 'im up widout sayin' grace.

"So, den, dar 'twuz, Brer Tiger 'ginst Brer Rabbit, en Brer Rabbit 'ginst Brer Tiger: one big, en tudder one little; one servigrous fum de word go, en tudder one got needer tush ner claw. Hit look mighty bad fer Brer Rabbit! Well, I wish ter goodness you could

er seed 'im 'bout dat time. He went 'long thoo de woods ez gay ez a colt in a barley-patch. He wunk at de trees, he shuck his fisties at de stumps, he make like he wuz quoilin' wid 'is shadder kaze it foller 'long atter 'im so close; en he went on scan'lous, mon!

Brer Rabbit ain't gone so mighty fur 'fo' he hear a big noise in de bushes, en lo en beholes, dar wuz ole Brer Elephen trompin' 'roun' en th'ashin' out de tops er de saplin's. He look big ez a young house, but, bless yo' soul! dat ain't set Brer Rabbit back none. He des march up en ax ole Brer Elephen how he come on, en one word led to anudder, twel Brer Rabbit up'n tell ole Brer Elephen all 'bout de confab what he been had wid Brer Tiger. Den he 'low dat ef ole Brer Elephen will loan 'im a helpin' han' dey kin drive Brer Tiger bodaciously out'n de county. Ole Brer Elephen flop his years en shake his snout like he sorter jubious.

"He 'low, 'I ain't gwine ter git hurted, is I, Brer Rabbit?'

"Dis make Brer Rabbit roll his eyes en study.

"He ax, 'Who de name er goodness gwine hurt you, Brer Elephen?'

"Brer Elephen 'low, 'Brer Tiger got sharp claws en long tushes. I skeer'd he bite me en scratch me.'

"Brer Rabbit say, ''Cordin' ter dat I oughter be skeer'd uv a flea, kaze des ez I kin sqush a flea, des dat away you kin sqush Brer Tiger. Yit dey ain't gwine be no squshin' done. Ef you 'll do what I tell you, we 'll des take'n run Brer Tiger out'n de county. Goodness knows, ef my upper lip wuz long en limber like yone, I 'boun' I 'd a done got rid er Brer Tiger long 'fo' now!'

"Brer Elephen, he 'gree ter do what Brer Rabbit say, but he flop his years en work his snout like he mighty restless in de min', en Brer Rabbit holp 'im up de best way he kin wid biggity talk.

"Soon nex' mornin' Brer Rabbit wuz up en a-movin'. He done had eve'ything fix, en he sot 'roun' in de bushes whar he kin see Brer Tiger long ways off. Bimeby he see Brer Tiger come sidlin' down de path, en no sooner is Brer Rabbit seed 'im dan he make a break en run ter whar Brer Elephen stannin'. Den Brer Rabbit tuck en wrop a long vine 'roun' one er ole Brer Elephen's behime legs, en den 'roun' a tree. He fix it so dat

anybody passin' 'long would make sho' de leg tied hard en fas'. Den ole Brer Elephen kneel down, en Brer Rabbit tuck a runnin' start en light up on his back. Dey done had all de 'rangements made, en when Brer Tiger come 'long, he seed a sight dat make 'im open his eyes. Dar wuz Brer Rabbit on top er ole Brer Elephen back, en dar wuz ole Brer Elephen wid his behime leg tied ter de tree, a-swingin' backerds en forrerds, en a-rockin' fum side ter side.

"Brer Tiger look at um a little while, en de notion strike 'im dat Brer Rabbit wuz cotch up dar en can't git down. Dis make Brer Tiger laugh twel he show all his tushes. He walk 'roun', he did, en feel so good he rub hisse'f 'ginst de saplin's des like you seen cats rub up 'ginst cheer-legs. Den he sot down flat er de groun' en grin at Brer Rabbit, en lick his chops. Ole Brer Elephen swing backerds en forrerds, en rock fum side to side.

"Brer Tiger 'low, 'I tole you I 'd git you, Brer Rabbit, en now I done come atter you.'

"Brer Elephen swing backerds en forrerds, en rock fum side ter side.

"Brer Rabbit say, 'You done come, is you? Well, des wait a minnit twel I git thoo skin-

nin' dis creetur what I des cotch. Stay dar twel I git good en ready fer you.'

"Den Brer Rabbit dip down his head by ole Brer Elephen's year en whisper, 'Squall when I put my nose on yo' neck. Don't be skeer'd. Des squall.'

"Den ole Brer Elephen squeal thoo dat snout er his'n; you mought er heerd 'im a mile er mo'.

"Brer Rabbit holler out, 'Des wait, Brer Tiger. Yo' turn 'll come terreckly. It 'll go mighty hard wid you ef I hatter run atter you.'

"Ole Brer Elephen swing backerds en forrerds, en rock fum side ter side. Eve'y time Brer Rabbit 'd nibble behime his years, he 'd squall out en tromple de groun'.

"When he fus' seed Brer Rabbit up dar on ole Brer Elephen's back, Brer Tiger sorter sot hisse'f on de groun' fer ter make a jump at 'im, but time he see how ole Brer Elephen hollerin' en prancin', Brer Tiger riz en 'gun ter back off. A hick'y nut fell off'n a tree en hit de groun', en Brer Tiger jump like somebody shot at 'im. When Brer Rabbit see dis, it tickle 'im so dat he come mighty nigh laughin' out loud. But he dip his head

down, en make like he gnyawin' ole Brer Elephen on de neck, an ole Brer Elephen, he squall loud ez he kin.

"Brer Rabbit prance up en down on Brer Elephen back like he huntin' fer a mo' tender place, en holler out: —

"'Don't go 'way, Brer Tiger. Des wait; I'll be ready fer you terreckly.'

"Brer Tiger he back off, en Brer Elephen swing backerds en forrerds, en rock fum side ter side, en squeal thoo his snout.

"Brer Rabbit holler out, 'No use ter git weak-kneed, Brer Tiger. Gi' me time. Dis Elephen blood tas'e salty. It make me dry. You won't have long ter wait.'

"Brer Tiger, he back off en back off. Brer Rabbit, he make out he bitin' ole Brer Elephen on de year. Ole Brer Elephen swing backerds en forrerds, en rock fum side ter side, en snort en tromple de grass.

"'Bout dat time Brer Rabbit make like he gwine ter come down. He make like he huntin' fer a saft place ter jump, en when Brer Tiger see dat, he made a break en des fell over hisse'f tryin' ter get out'n reach. Brer Rabbit holler at 'im, but he ain't stop; he des keep a-runnin', en 't wuz many a long

day 'fo' de creeturs seed 'im back dar in dat settlement.

"Elephen skeer'd er tiger," Uncle Remus went on, by way of explanation. "En all de time dat Brer Rabbit wuz talkin' ter Brer Tiger, Brer Elephen wuz so skeer'd dat a little mo 'n he 'd 'a' went tarin' thoo de woods like a harrycane. Ez 't wuz, des ez soon ez Brer Tiger got out'n sight, old Brer Elephen retched up wid his snout en wrung de top off'n er saplin' en 'gun ter fan hisse'f wid it."

"Uncle Remus," said the little boy, when the old man had brought the story to a close, "did you ever see an elephant?"

"Well, suh," said Uncle Remus, after a long pause, "you tetch me in a tender place, you sho'ly does. I seed um, en I ain't seed um. Now, how kin you make dat out?"

"How could that be?" asked the child, laughing.

"I tell you now, dey ain't no fun in it," continued the old negro, trying to frown. "I done hear talk dat dey wuz a show gwine ter come 'long de road, on de way ter town, but it drapt out'n my min', twel one day I wuz ridin' dat ar roan mule, takin' a letter over

ter Marse Bill Little's. I went on, I did, en tuck de note en start back wid de answer. Marse Bill Little had done gi' me a dram fer ole 'quaintance sake, en I wuz warm in my feelin's. Dat ar roan mule des paced 'long free en easy, en dey want no happier nigger dan what I wuz.

"Well, suh, I heard a little fuss in front er me, en I raise my head, en right dar at me, right spang 'pon topper me, wuz a great big elephen. I des got a glimpse un 'im, kaze de roan mule seed 'im time I did, en she des give a squat en a flutter, en de nex' thing I know'd my head wuz driv in de groun' in about up ter my neck. I dunner how long I laid dar, but time I got de mud en grit out'n my eyes de elephen wuz done gone. You may say I seed de elephen, er you may say I ain't seed' im; I ain't gwine ter 'spute 'bout it. But dat ar roan mule seed im."

XIV.

BROTHER BILLY GOAT EATS HIS DINNER.

One Saturday afternoon, Uncle Remus was sitting in the door of his cabin enjoying the sunshine, while the little boy was mending, or trying to mend, a small wagon with which he had been playing. It was a half holiday on the plantation, and there were several groups of negroes loitering about the quarters. Ordinarily the little boy would have been interested in their songs or in the drolleries that were passing from lip to lip, and from group to group; but now he was too busy with his broken wagon. The old man watched the child through half closed eyes, and with a smile that was grim only in appearance. Finally, seeing that the little chap was growing impatient, Uncle Remus cried out with some asperity, —

"What you doin' longer dat waggin? Gi' me here! Fus' news you know, you won't have no waggin."

The little boy carried it to the old man very readily.

"Sump'n the matter wid de runnin' gear," Uncle Remus remarked. "I dunner how come it got any runnin' gear. If you had a i'on waggin, it would n't las' you twel termorrer night."

Just at that moment, Big Sam happened to get into an angry dispute with Becky's Bill. Big Sam was almost a giant, but Becky's Bill had a free mind and a loud tongue, and he made a great deal more noise than Sam. This seemed to irritate Uncle Remus.

"Hush up, you triflin' vilyun!" he said. "You talk bigger dan de Billy Goat did."

The other negroes laughed at this, and Becky's Bill soon dropped the quarrel, which was not hard to do, seeing that Big Sam was saying very little. The allusion to the Billy Goat attracted the attention of the little boy. He felt sure there was a story somewhere behind it, and when Uncle Remus had finished his wagon, he began to investigate it.

"What did the Billy Goat talk about?" he asked.

"Go en break yo' waggin; you gwine ter break it anyhow, en you des ez well go now."

"I won't break it any more, Uncle Remus," said the little boy. "I 'm going to grease it and put it away. What did the Billy Goat talk about?"

"He talked 'bout deze yer little chaps what pesters folks constant, en he say dey better quit der 'havishness en l'arn how ter don't. Dat what he say."

"Now, Uncle Remus, you know that is n't what the Billy Goat said."

"Well, he ought ter say it if he ain't," remarked the old man.

The shrewd youngster placed himself in the attitude of a listener and patiently waited. Uncle Remus watched him a moment. Then he shook his head and said resignedly: —

"You sho' does bang my time. You er wuss'n Brer Rabbit."

The little boy blushed and smiled at this, for he regarded it as a high compliment.

"Yasser," Uncle Remus went on, "wuss'n Brer Rabbit — lots wuss. Hen can't cackle widout you wanter see what kinder egg she lay; ole Brer Billy Goat can't take a chaw terbacker in jue season widout you want ter know what he talkin' 'bout. En ef dey is any tale 'bout Brer Billy Goat, 't ain't no good tale fer

chilluns, kaze dey might take a notion dat big talk is de right kinder talk, en when dey take dat notion, somebody got ter frail 'em out wid a bresh broom."

The little boy said nothing, but sat listening.

"I mighty fear'd you 'll hatter skuzen me," Uncle Remus remarked, after a pause. "Look like my 'membunce wobblin' 'roun' like a hoss wid de blin' staggers. Yit, nigh ez I kin git at all de ins en outs er dish yer tale what we been talkin' 'bout, dey wuz one time when Brer Wolf wuz gwine lopin' 'roun' de settlement feelin' mighty hongry. He want some vittles fer hisse'f, en he want some fer his fambly, yit it seem like he can't fin' none nowhars. He talk wid Brar B'ar, en he hear tell dat shote meat mighty good, but he can't fin' no shote; he hear tell dat goat meat mighty good, but he can't fin' no goat.

"But bimeby, one day whiles he gwine 'long de road, he seed a big rock layin' in a fiel', en on top er dish yer rock wuz Brer Billy Goat. 'T wan't none er deze yer little bit er rocks; it 'uz mighty nigh ez big ez dish yer house, en ole Brer Billy Goat wuz a-standin' up dar kinder ruminatin' 'bout ol' times. Brer Wolf

loped up, he did, en made ready fer ter see what kinder tas'e goat meat got. Yit he took notice dat Brer Billy Goat wuz chawin' away like he eatin' sump'n. Brer Wolf sorter wait awhile, but Brer Billy Goat wuz constant a-chawin' en a-chawin'. Brer Wolf look en he look, but Brer Billy Goat keep on a-chawin' en a-chawin'.

"Brer Wolf look close. He ain't see no green grass, he ain't see no shucks, he ain't see no straw, he ain't see no leaf. Brer Billy Goat keep on a-chawin' en a-chawin'. Brer Wolf study, but he dunner what de name er goodness Brer Billy Goat kin be eatin' up dar. So bimeby he hail 'im.

"He 'low, sezee, 'Howdy, Brer Billy Goat, howdy. I hope you er middlin' peart deze hard times?'

"Brer Billy Goat shake his long beard en keep on a-chawin'.

"Brer Wolf 'low, sezee, 'What you eatin', Brer Billy Goat? Look like it tas'e mighty good.'

"Brer Billy Goat 'low, 'I 'm a-eatin' dish yer rock; dat what I 'm a-eatin'.'

"Brer Wolf make answer, 'I 'm mighty hongry myself, — but I don't speck I kin go dat.'

"Brer Billy Goat 'low, 'Come up whar I is, en I 'll break you off a hunk wid my horns.'

"Brer Wolf say, sezee, dat he mighty much erbleege, but he speck he hatter be gittin' 'long, en he 'low ter hisse'f, 'Ef Brer Billy Goat kin eat rock like dat, I speck I better go 'long en let 'im 'lone.'

"Brer Billy Goat holler at 'im en say, sezee, 'Ef you can't clime up Brer Wolf, I kin come down dar en help you up. De rock whar I is is mo' fresher dan dat down dar. It 's some harder, but it 's lots mo' fresher.'

"But Brer Wolf ain't stop ter make answer. He des kep' a-gwine. He tuck it in his head dat if Brer Billy Goat kin eat rock dat away, 't won't do ter fool 'long wid 'im, kaze ef a creetur kin eat rock, he kin eat whatsomdever dey put 'fo' im."

"What was Brother Goat chewing?" asked the little boy.

"Nothin' 't all, honey. He wuz des chawin' his cud en talkin' big, en I done seed lots er folks do dat away — niggers well ez white folks."

XV.

THE KING THAT TALKED BIGGITY.

Uncle Remus paused, leaned his head sidewise on his hand, and regarded the little boy intently. After awhile he closed his eyes slowly and remarked: —

"I speck maybe you done git de idee dat biggity talk goes a mighty long ways. Well, den, you des well ter git dat idee out'n yo' head. De bluffin' man is mos' sholy gwine ter git bluffed — dey ain't no two ways 'bout dat. Brer Billy Goat tuck'n bluff Brer Wolf, but spozen Brer Wolf had de sense what he oughter bin bo'n wid? Man, suh! he 'd a made mince-meat out'n Brer Billy Goat 'fo' you kin wink yo' fingers en wiggle yo' eyeleds. You hear de fuss what dat ar Becky's Bill wuz a-makin' des now? Well, ef Big Sam had 'a' made at 'im, he 'd 'a' galloped off bellerin' like a calf.

"Dat put me in min' er de time when dey wuz a king some'rs. Hit mought er bin 'roun'

here, er it mought er bin back up dar in Ferginny; no matter 'bout dat, hit uz some'rs. Dat ar king wuz one er deze yer ole timey kings. He bin settin' up dar kingin' over um so long dat his ha'r done drap out, en his toofies got loose, en his han' shake wid de palsy. When de folks see dat, dey say dat it 's in about time for dat king ter stop kingin', en let some yuther somebody do some kingin'. But de ole king he helt on, like tick on a cow. He des kep' on a-kingin'.

"Bimeby de folks git tired, en dey meet tergedder en choosen a n'er king. De ole king ax who is he; but de folks 'fuse ter give his name out. Dey fear'd de ole king gwine ter whirl in en make way wid 'im. De ole king ax is he ole man. De people 'spon' dat he older dan some folks, en lots younger dan some yuthers. Kaze he mighty mean man, en dey know dat ef dey tell 'im dey done choosen a ole man, he 'll sen' out en have all de ole folks kil't; en ef dey tell 'im dey done gone en choosen a young man, dey know he 'll never res' tell he done massycreed all de young people. Yasser! Dat 'zackly de kinder man what he wuz, en dem folks what he been kingin' over, dey know dat dey hatter step mighty thin ef dey want to keep der hides whole.

"Den you oughter hear dat ole king talk biggity. He des fa'rly poun' de groun'. He rip, he rave, he fume, he fret. Yit 't ain't do no good. Dar wuz de folks, en dey des stood der groun' en kep' der eye on 'im. Bimeby de ole king sorter cool down. He seed 't wan't no use fer ter be cuttin' up no didos, so he pick up his hat en his hankcher whar he done drap um, en got back on de whatzisname."

"On his throne?" the little boy suggested.

"I speck so, honey," responded Uncle Remus, with a laugh. "He got back on de place whar dey set when dey do der kingin', en he 'low, sezee: —

"'You all got de idee dat kaze I 'm ole en shaky dat I ain't got no sense, but I 'm des a-gwine ter show you. Go en tell de man what you done choosen dat 'fo' he kin be king he got ter sen' me a beef. 'T ain't got ter be no bull, en 't ain't got ter be no cow. When he do dat, he kin be king; kaze den I 'll know he got sense 'nuff fer ter do de kingin' fer you all des same ez I bin doin' it.'

"De folks look at one anudder en shake der heads, en den dey go off en hol' a confab. Dey dunner what dey gwine to do. De man what dey choosen fer ter be der new king wuz

a young man, en dey skeerd he can't do what de ole king say. Bimeby some un um went en broke de news, en de young man sorter raise his head en wink one eye. He 'low, sezee: —

"'Go back en tell de ole king, dat I got a fine steer fattenin' in my pens, but he got ter come git 'im; but he ain't got to come in de day ner needer in de night.'

"When de folks hear dis, it make um feel sorter holp up, en dey went back en tole de ole king what de young man say. He sot dar, he did, en sorter study, en scratch his head. Den he ax um ef dey be so good ez ter gi' 'im a chaw terbacker. He tuck a big chaw, en den he pick up his hat en his cane, en grab his kyarpet-bag, en tell 'um, 'So long.'

"Now, den," said Uncle Remus, after a pause, "what good is it do dat man fer ter talk his biggity talk? I wish somebody be so good ez ter tell me dat."

XVI.

BROTHER RABBIT'S MONEY MINT.

One day the little boy was telling Uncle Remus about how much money one of his mother's brothers was going to make. Oh, it was ever so much — fifty, a hundred, may be a thousand bales of cotton in one season. Uncle Remus groaned a little during this recital.

"Wharbouts he gwine ter make it?" the old man inquired with some asperity.

"Oh, in Mississippi," said the little boy. "Uncle James told papa that the cotton out there grows so high that a man sitting on his horse could hide in it."

"Did Marse Jeems see dat cotton hisse'f?" asked Uncle Remus.

"Yes, he did. He 's been out there, and he saw it with his own eyes. He says he can make ever so many hundred dollars in Mississippi where he makes one here."

"Marse John ain't gwine, is he?"

"No; I heard papa tell mamma that Uncle James was drawing his long bow, and then mamma said she reckoned that her kinfolks were as truthful as anybody else's."

Immediately Uncle Remus's features lost their severity, and he lay back in his chair to laugh.

"Dat Miss Sally, up en down. Hit her kinnery en you got ter hit her. But yo' pa know Marse Jeems, en I been knowin' 'im sence he wuz in his teens; en when he git ter talkin' he'll stretch his blanket spite er de worl'. He allers would do dat, en he allers will. Now, dat des de long en de short un it. I don't keer ef he is kin ter Miss Sally, he 'll talk wil'.

"Bless yo' soul, honey. I done hear talk er Massasip long 'fo' you wuz bornded. I done seed um go dar, en I done seed um come back, en eve'y time I hear folks talk 'bout makin' mo' money off dar dan dey kin anywhars nigher home, it put me in min' er de time when Brer Fox went huntin' de place whar dey make money."

"Is it a story, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy.

"Well, 't ain't ez you may say one er deze yer reg'lar up en down tales, what runs cross-

ways. Dish yer tale goes right straight. Brer Fox meet up wid Brer Rabbit in de big road, en dey pass de time er day, en ax one er nudder how der fambly connection is. Brer Fox say he sorter middlin' peart, en Brer Rabbit say he sorter betwix '*My gracious!*' en '*Thank gracious!*' Whiles dey er runnin' on en confabbin', Brer Fox hear sump'n rattlin' in Brer Rabbit's pocket.

"He 'low, 'Ef I ain't mighty much mistaken, Brer Rabbit, I hear money rattlin'.'

"Brer Rabbit sorter grin slow en hol' his head keerless.

"He say, ''T ain't nothin' much — des some small change what I bleedz ter take wid me in de case er needcessity.'

"Wid dat he drawed out a big han'ful er speeshy-dollars, en quarters, en sev'mpunces, en thrips, en all right spang-bang new. Hit shined in de sun twel it fair blin' yo' eyes.

"Brer Fox 'low, 'Laws a massy, Brer Rabbit! I ain't seed so much money sence I sol' my watermilions las' year. Ain't you skeerd some un 'll fling you down en take it 'way fum you?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Dem what man 'nuff ter take it kin have it;' en he des strut 'long

de road dar mo' samer dan one er deze yer milliumterry mens what got yaller stripes on der britches.

"Brer Fox 'low, 'Whar de name er goodness you git so much new speeshy, Brer Rabbit?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'I git it whar dey make it at; dat whar I git it.'

"Brer Fox stop by de side er de road, en look 'stonish. He low, 'Wharbouts does dey make dish yer speeshy at?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Fust in one place en den in anudder. You got ter do like me, Brer Fox; you got ter keep yo' eye wide open.'

"Brer Fox 'low, 'Fer massy sake, Brer Rabbit, tell me how I gwine ter fine de place.'

"He beg en he beg, Brer Fox did, en Brer Rabbit look at 'im hard, like he got some doubts on his min'. Den Brer Rabbit sot down by de side er de road en mark in de san' wid his walkin' cane.

"Bimeby he say, 'Well, spozen I tell you, you 'll go blabbin' it 'roun' de whole neighborhoods, en den dey 'll git it all, en we won't git none 't all.'

"But Brer Fox des vow en declar' ter gra-

cious dat he won't tell a livin' soul, en den ole Brer Rabbit sorter bent hisse'f back en cle'r up his th'oat.

"He say, 'T ain't much atter you fine it out, Brer Fox; all you got ter do is ter watch de road twel you see a waggin come 'long. Ef you 'll look right close, you 'll see dat de waggin, ef hit 's de right kind er waggin, is got two front wheels en two behime wheels; en you 'll see fuddermo' dat de front wheels is lots littler dan de behime wheels. Now, when you see dat, what is you bleedz ter b'lieve?'

"Brer Fox study little while, en den shuck his head. He 'low, 'You too much fer me, Brer Rabbit.'

"Brer Rabbit look like he feel sorry kaze Brer Fox sech a numbskull. He say, 'When you see dat, you bleedz ter b'lieve dat atter so long a time de big wheel gwine ter ketch de little one. Yo' common sense ought ter tell you dat.'

"Brer Fox 'low, 'Hit sholy look so.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Ef you know dat de big wheel gwine ter ketch de little wheel, en dat bran new money gwine ter drap fum betwixt um when dey grind up 'ginst one anudder, what you gwine do den?'

"Still Brer Fox study, en shake his head. Brer Rabbit look like he gittin' sick.

"He say, 'You kin set down en let de waggin go on by, ef you don't want no bran new money. Den agin, ef you want de money, you kin foller 'long en keep watch, en see when de behime wheels overtake de front uns en be on han' when de money starts ter drappin'.'

"Brer Fox look like he got de idee. He sorter laugh.

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Nex' time you see a waggin gwine by, Brer Fox, des holler for me ef you don't want ter take no chances. Des bawl out! I ain't got 'nuff speeshy, en I ain't gwine ter have 'nuff.'

"Brer Fox, he broke off a broom straw en 'gun ter chaw on it, en des 'bout dat time, dey hear a waggin comin' 'cross de hill.

"Brer Rabbit 'low, 'Des say de word, Brer Fox, en ef you ain't gwine 'long atter de waggin, I 'll go myse'f!'

"Brer Fox say, 'Maybe de wheels done grinded tergedder back yonder a piece.'

"Brer Rabbit 'low, 'I ain't got time ter 'spute, Brer Fox. Ef you ain't gwine, des say de word!'

"Brer Fox sorter laugh like he shame. He say, 'I b'lieve I 'll go a little piece er de way en see how de wheels run.'

"Wid dat," said Uncle Remus, looking up at the ceiling with a peculiar smile, "Brer Rabbit wish Brer Fox good luck, en went on 'bout his business. Yit he ain't go so fur dat he can't watch Brer Fox's motions. At de rise er de nex' hill he look back, en dar he see Brer Fox trottin' 'long atter de waggin. When he see dat, Brer Rabbit des lay down in de grass en kick up his heels en holler."

Uncle Remus laughed, and the little boy laughed. The old negro's merriment was as keen as that of the youngster, for his humor swept over a wide field of human experience. The little boy laughed at the transparent trick; Uncle Remus no doubt beheld in his imagination a long procession of human Brer Foxes "polin' 'long," up hill and down hill, waiting for the hind wheels to overtake the front ones. After a while the little boy asked what became of Brother Fox.

"Well, honey," said Uncle Remus, "he des foller 'long, trottin' en gallopin', waitin' fer de wheels ter ketch up wid one anudder. Ef he ain't in Massasip by dis time, I 'm

mighty much mistaken. I boun' yo' Unc' Jeems 'll see 'im when he go out dar! Brer Fox had ter take his foot in his han', en git dar de bes' way he kin; yo' Unc' Jeems gwine by conveyance."

XVII.

WHY THE MOON'S FACE IS SMUTTY.

"HIT 's money, honey, de worl' over," remarked Uncle Remus, after a somewhat prolonged silence. "Go whar you will, en go when you may, en stay ez long ez mought be, en you 'll fin' folks huntin' atter money — mornin' en evenin', day en night.

"Look at um! Why, dar 's de Moon," — something in the attitude or the countenance of the child caused Uncle Remus to stop suddenly and laugh.

"The Moon, Uncle Remus?" exclaimed the youngster. "What about the Moon?"

"Well, you know how folks talk 'bout de Moon. You 'll hear um say she 's on her fus' quarter, en den on 'er las' quarter; en dat des 'zackly de way dey talk 'bout money. I hear tell dat one time dey wuz a man gwine 'long en de woods, en he hear a mighty jinglin' en rattlin'. He look 'roun', en see it wuz de Moon er changin'. Seem like she lacked a quarter,

en de man pulled out his money-purse en flung de quarter in, en den she change all right.

"But dat ain't no tale; hit des a rig," Uncle Remus continued, not waiting to see the effect of this venerable joke. "De tale dat I been hearin' 'bout de moon ain't got no money in it, en dat mighty funny, too, kaze it look like money is mix up wid mos' eve'ything.

"In dem days, way back yander, de Moon use ter come down en get behime a big poplar log, when she wanter make a change. She ain't want nobody to see 'er. She 'd rise later en later eve'y night, des like she do now, en den to'rds de las' she 'd drap down on de fur een er de lan', over dat away, en slip behime de poplar log en change all she want ter.

"But one time dey wuz a man gwine 'long thoo de woods totin' a bag er charcoal, what he been burnin'. He been watchin' de coal kil' sence midnight de night befo', en he uz so tired out en broke down dat stidder singin' er whistlin', like folks does when dey go thoo de woods, he uz des gwine 'bout his business widout making any fuss. He wuz axin hisse'f ef dey 'd be any hot ashcake waitin' fer 'im, en whedder de ole 'oman 'd save 'im any pot-liquor fum dinner.

"He wuz gwine 'long dis away, when de fus' news he know, he come right 'pon de Moon whiles she wuz changin'. Man, suh! Dey wuz de bigges' flutterment den en dar dat dey 's ever been befo' er since. Folks 'way off thought dey could hear thunder, dough dey wan't nothin' in de roun' worl' but de Moon tryin' fer ter git out de way er de man.

"De man, he drapt de bag er charcoal en run like ole Scratch wuz atter 'im. He des tored thoo de woods like a harrycane wuz blowin' 'im 'long. He 'uz gwine one way en de Moon anudder, but de Moon she tripped en fell right topper de bag er charcoal, en you kin see de signs un it down ter dis day. Look at 'er when you will, en you 'll see dat she look like she been hit 'cross de face wid a sut-bag. Don't take my word fer it. Des look fer yo'-se'f! Dar 't is! Ever sence dat day de Moon done got so she do 'er changin' up in de elements."

After awhile the little boy asked what became of the man that had the bag of charcoal.

"What dat got ter do wid de tale?" said Uncle Remus, sharply. "Long ez de Moon is up dar all safe en soun', 'ceppin' de smut,

it don't make no diffunce 'bout no man. You run 'long en tell yo' Unc' Jeems dat ef he gwine gi' you anything he better let you have it 'fo' he go out dar ter Massasip — kaze, I tell you right now, Massasip is des anudder name fer trouble. I done seed it work out dat away."

XVIII.

BROTHER RABBIT CONQUERS BROTHER LION.

"Uncle Remus," remarked the little boy, one day, "papa says that the animals have n't got sure enough sense."

"Did Marse John tell you dat?" asked the old man, letting his shoe-hammer drop from his hands, as though astonishment had rendered him helpless. "Did Marse John set up flat-footed in a cheer and tell you dat de creeturs ain't got sho 'nuff sense? Ain't he wink his eye when he tell you dat? Ain't you see his chin drap?"

The little boy had seen none of these manifestations, and he said so.

"Well," exclaimed Uncle Remus, with a groan, "I dunner how come Marse John fer ter take on dat away. He used to be a mighty joker when he wuz fust married; but look like he too ole fer dat kinder doin's now. When you go back up dar, yon tell Marse John, dat time he been wid de creeturs long

ez I is, he won't set up dar wid a straight face en say dat dey ain't got sho 'nuff sense. Des ax 'im how dat ole blue sow up dar in de woods pastur' know when ter shake de plum tree. Ax 'im who tol' 'er how ter bump 'er head 'ginst de floor er de crib en shatter de corn out. En den, when he git thoo tellin' you 'bout dat, ax 'im how dat brindle cow larn't how ter open all de plantation gates wid 'er horn.

"I be blest," continued Uncle Remus, laughing a little, "ef dat cow ain't a sight. Ef Marse John 'll des let 'er come in de house, she 'll go up sta'rs en onlock his trunk wid 'er horn, en chaw up dat ar claw-hammer coat what he got married in. She mos' sholy will. Co'se de creeturs can't talk none, so folks kin tell what dey say; but ef you gwine ter blame anybody fer dat, blame de folks, don't blame de creeturs.

"Take um up one side en down de yuther, en all 'roun' ez fur ez dey go, en dey got much sense ez folks. Dey ain't got law sense, en dey ain't got buyin' en sellin' sense, but what dey want wid it? What dey gwine do wid it ef dey had it? Tell me dat! De ole cow, she want ter git in de sallid patch, en she

know how ter open de gate. De ole sow want ripe plums, en she shake de tree; she want corn, en she bump 'er head 'ginst de planks en shatter it out. What mo' do dey want? Dey done got der eddycation.

"De littler de creeturs is, de mo' sense dey got, kaze dey bleedz ter have it. You hear folks say dat Brer Rabbit is full er tricks. It 's des de name dey give it. What folks calls tricks is creetur sense. Ef ole Brer Lion had much sense ez Brer Rabbit, what de name er goodness would de balance er de creeturs do? Dey would n't be none un um lef' by dis time."

"The Lion could n't catch Brother Rabbit, could he, Uncle Remus?" said the little boy.

"Now you talkin', honey," exclaimed the old man, enthusiastically. "'Long side er Brer Rabbit ole Brer Lion ain't knee high ter a duck. He mighty strong; he mighty servigrous; but when it come ter head-work he ain't nowhar.

"Dey wuz one time when Brer Lion wuz sorter playin' overseer wid de yuther creeturs. It seem like he got de idee dat all un um got ter pay 'im toll, kaze he de strongest en de mos' servigrous. He claim one out'n eve'y

THE SITTING ROOM, WREN'S NEST, SHOWING THE TABLE AT WHICH MANY OF THE UNCLE REMUS STORIES WERE WRITTEN

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fambly: one sheep fum de sheeps, one goat fum de goats, en one fum all de kinds. Bimeby, atter so long a time, he sont word ter Brer Rabbit dat his turn done come, en Brer Rabbit he sont back word, 'All a-settin'.' Co'se dis make ole Miss Rabbit en all de chilluns feel mighty bad. De chilluns, dey sot 'roun' a-whimperin' en a-snufflin', en ole Miss Rabbit, she went 'bout cryin' en wipin' 'er eyes on 'er apern. But Brer Rabbit, he sot up en smoke his seegyar, en tell um for ter quit der 'havishness en larn how ter don't.

"He 'low, 'Ole 'oman, ef I ain't back by supper-time, des set my vittles down dar on de ha'th, so it 'll keep sorter warm.'

"Ole Miss Rabbit say, dat stidder wantin' vittles, he 'll be vittles hisse'f, en den she snuffle wuss en wuss. But Brer Rabbit he des hoot at 'er, en den he tuck down his walkin' cane en put out fer ter see Brer Lion. De little Rabs, dey holler out, 'Good-by, daddy!' en Brer Rabbit, he holler back, 'So long!' Ole Miss Rabbit, she look atter 'im, she did, en den she flung 'er apern over 'er head, en des boo-hoo.

"But Brer Rabbit, he march down de road ez gay ez ef he gwine ter a frolic. He march

on, he did, en des 'fo' he git ter de place whar ole Brer Lion stay at, he hid his walkin' cane in de fence cornder, en rumpled up his ha'r en draw'd hisse'f up twel he look like he ain't bigger 'n a poun' er soap atter a hard day's washin'. Den he went whar dey wuz a big, deep spring, a little piece off fum de road, en look at hisse'f in de water. He sort er roach back his years, en make hisse'f look umble-come-tumble, en den he draw'd his mouf 'roun' en wunk one eye, en shuck his fist at his shadder in de water.

"He got back in de big road, he did, en crope 'long like he ailin', limpin' fus on one foot en den on tudder, en bimeby he come ter de place whar ole Brer Lion stay at. Brer Rabbit sorter drag hisse'f 'long, en make a bow. Brer Lion look at 'im sideways, en ax 'im whar he gwine. Brer Rabbit say he come de mo' willin' kaze it 's his turn ter come, en he been feelin' mighty po'ly dis long time. He talk mighty weak en trimbly.

"Brer Lion look at 'im right close, en 'low, 'You won't make a moufful. Time I eat you, I 'll des be gettin' hongry good.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Yasser, I know I ain't fat, en I speck I got lots er fleas on me, but

I 'm mighty willin'. I got a bad cough, en I 'm tired er fallin' off. I 'm des about ez fat ez de mule de man had, which he hatter tie a knot in his tail fer ter keep 'im fum slippin' thoo de collar.'

"Brer Lion look at 'im, en study. Brer Rabbit 'uz so skeer'd he talk weaker en weaker.

"He say, 'Whiles I comin' 'long des now, I seed a creetur dat uz mos' big en fat ez what you is, en I 'low ter myse'f dat I wish ter goodness I uz fat ez he is; so Brer Lion kin make out his dinner.'

"Brer Lion 'low, 'Who is he?'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'I ain't ax 'im 'is name. He 'fuse ter 'spon' ter my howdy, en he look so servigrous dat I put out fum dar.'

"Brer Lion say, 'Come, show me whar he is.'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'I 'd do it in a minnit, Brer Lion, but I skeer'd he 'll hurt you.'

"Brer Lion sorter bristle up at dis. He 'low, 'Hurt who? Come on, en go wid me whar he is, en I 'll show you who 'll git hurted, en dat in short order!'

"Brer Rabbit shuck his head. He say, 'You better take me, Brer Lion. I ain't much, but I 'm sump'n, en dat ar creetur what

I seed will sholy hurt you. He got claws en he got tushes, kaze I done seed um. Don't go whar he is, Brer Lion, ef you got any friendly feelin' fer yo' fambly. Dat creetur will sholy cripple you!'

"Dis make Brer Lion mighty mad. He 'low, 'Git right in de road dar en show me whar he is!'

"Brer Rabbit say, 'Well, ef I bleedz ter go, Brer Lion, I 'll go. I done tol' you, en dat 's all I kin do.'

"Dey went on, dey did, en Brer Rabbit tuck Brer Lion ter de spring. When dey got dar, Brer Rabbit look 'roun' en say, 'He uz right 'roun' here somers, en he ain't so mighty fur off now, kaze I feel it in my bones.'

"Den he crope up, Brer Rabbit did, en look in de spring. Time he do dis, he fetched a squall en jump back: 'Ouch, Brer Lion! he in dar! Less run! He 'll git us, sho!'

"Brer Lion walk up ter de spring en look in. Sho 'nuff, dar wuz a big creetur lookin' back at 'im. Brer Lion holler at 'im. De creetur in de spring ain't say nothin'. Brer Lion shuck his head; de creetur shuck his. Brer Lion showed his tushes; de creetur grin

at 'im. Dey kep' on dis away, twel bimeby Brer Lion git so mad dat he jump in de spring head foremos'. When he in dar he can't git out no mo', en so dar he is, strangled wid de water en drownded fer de want er bofe sense en breff.

"Brer Rabbit, he caper 'roun' dar some little time, en den he put out fer home, en when he git dar, he tuck his chilluns on his knee en tole um a mighty tale 'bout how he make way wid ole Brer Lion; en all de creeturs hear 'bout it, en dey go 'roun' en say dat Brer Rabbit sholy is got deze 'ere things up here."

Uncle Remus tapped his forehead significantly, and the little boy laughed.

XIX.

"HEYO, HOUSE!"

"I DON'T think Brother Lion had much sense," remarked the little boy after awhile.

"Yit he had some," responded Uncle Remus. "He bleedz ter had some, but he ain't got much ez Brer Rabbit. Dem what got strenk ain't got so mighty much sense. You take niggers — dey er lots stronger dan what white folks is. I ain't so strong myse'f," remarked the old man, with a sly touch of vanity that was lost on the little boy, "but de common run er niggers is lots stronger dan white folks. Yit I done tuck notice in my time dat what white folks calls sense don't turn out ter be sense eve'y day en Sunday too. I ain't never see de patter-roller what kin keep up wid me. He may go hoss-back, he may go foot-back, it don't make no diffunce ter me. Dey never is kotch me yit, en when dey does, I 'll let you know.

"Dat de way wid Brer Rabbit," Uncle Re-

mus went on, after a pause. "De few times what he been outdone he mighty willin' fer ter let um talk 'bout it, ef it 'll do um any good. Dem what outdo 'im got de right ter brag, en he ain't make no deniance un it.

"Atter he done make way wid ole Brer Lion, all de yuther creeturs say he sholy is a mighty man, en dey treat 'im good. Dis make 'im feel so proud dat he bleedz ter show it, en so he strut 'roun' like a boy when he git his fust pa'r er boots.

"'Bout dat time, Brer Wolf tuck a notion dat ef Brer Rabbit kin outdo ole Brer Lion, he can't outdo him. So he pick his chance one day whiles ole Miss Rabbit en de little Rabs is out pickin' sallid fer dinner. He went in de house, he did, en wait fer Brer Rabbit ter come home. Brer Rabbit had his hours, en dis wuz one un um, en 't wan't long 'fo' here he come. He got a mighty quick eye, mon, en he tuck notice dat ev'ything mighty still. When he got little nigher, he tuck notice dat de front door wuz on de crack, en dis make 'im feel funny, kaze he know dat when his ole 'oman en de chillun out, dey allers pulls de door shet en ketch de latch. So he went up a little nigher, en he step thin ez a batter-

cake. He peep here, en he peep dar, yit he ain't see nothin'. He lissen in de chimbley cornder, en he lissen und' de winder, yit he ain't hear nothin'.

"Den he sorter wipe his mustach en study. He 'low ter hisse'f, 'De pot rack know what gwine on up de chimbley, de rafters know who 's in de loft, de bed-cord know who und' de bed. I ain't no pot-rack, I ain't no rafter, en I ain't no bed-cord, but, please gracious! I 'm gwine ter fin' who 's in dat house, en I ain't gwine in dar nudder. Dey mo' ways ter fin' out who fell in de mill-pond widout fallin' in yo'se'f.'

"Some folks," Uncle Remus went on, "would 'a' rushed in dar, en ef dey had, dey would n't 'a' rushed out no mo', kaze dey would n't 'a' been nothin' 't all lef' un um but a little scrap er hide en a han'ful er ha'r.

"Brer Rabbit got better sense dan dat. All he ax anybody is ter des gi' 'im han'-roomance, en dem what kin ketch 'im is mo' dan welly-come ter take 'im. Dat 'zackly de kinder man what Brer Rabbit is. He went off a little ways fum de house en clum a 'simmon stump en got up dar en 'gun ter holler.

"He 'low, 'Heyo, house!'

"De house ain't make no answer, en Brer Wolf, in dar behime de door, open his eyes wide. He ain't know what ter make er dat kinder doin's.

"Brer Rabbit holler, 'Heyo, house! Why n't you heyo?'

"House ain't make no answer, en Brer Wolf in dar behime de door sorter move roun' like he gittin' restless in de min'.

"Brer Rabbit out dar on de 'simmon stump holler mo' louder dan befo', 'Heyo, house! Heyo!'

"House stan' still, en Brer Wolf in dar behime de door 'gun ter feel col' chills streakin' up and down his back. In all his born days he ain't never hear no gwines on like dat. He peep thoo de crack er de door, but he can't see nothin'.

"Brer Rabbit holler louder, 'Heyo, house! Ain't you gwine ter heyo? Is you done los' what little manners you had?'

"Brer Wolf move 'bout wuss'n befo'. He feel des like some un done hit 'im on de funny-bone.

"Brer Rabbit holler hard ez he kin, but still he ain't git no answer, en den he 'low, 'Sholy sump'n nudder is de matter wid dat

house, kaze all de times befo' dis, it been holler'n back at me, Heyo, yo'se'f!'

"Den Brer Rabbit wait little bit, en bimeby he holler one mo' time, 'Heyo, house!'

"Ole Brer Wolf try ter talk like he speck a house 'ud talk, en he holler back, 'Heyo, yo'se'f!'

"Brer Rabbit wunk at hisse'f. He low, 'Heyo, house! why n't you talk hoarse like you got a bad col'?'

"Den Brer Wolf holler back, hoarse ez he kin, 'Heyo, yo'se'f!'

"Dis make Brer Rabbit laugh twel a little mo' en he 'd a drapt off'n dat ar 'simmon stump en hurt hisse'f.

"He 'low, 'Eh-eh, Brer Wolf! dat ain't nigh gwine ter do. You 'll hatter stan' out in de rain a mighty long time 'fo' you kin talk hoarse ez dat house!'

"I let you know," continued Uncle Remus, laying his hand gently on the little boy's shoulder, "I let you know, Brer Wolf come a-slinkin' out, en made a break fer home. Atter dat, Brer Rabbit live a long time wid'out any er de yuther creeturs a-pesterin un 'im!"

XX.

ACCORDING TO HOW THE DROP FALLS.

"Is I gwine tell you a tale right now?" said Uncle Remus, in response to a question by the little boy. "Well, I ain't right certain en sho' 'bout dat. It 's 'cordin ter how de drap falls."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the youngster, "I 've heard you say that before. I don't know what you mean when you say it 's according to how the drop falls."

"Ah-yi!" retorted Uncle Remus triumphantly, "Den I 'm a punkin ahead er yo' 'simmon, is I?"

"It 's according to how the drop falls," rejoined the little boy, laughing.

"De way dat sayin' come 'bout," said Uncle Remus, "may be funny, but 't ain't no tale. It des happen so. One time dey wuz a 'oman call on a neighbor 'oman des ' fo' dinner-time. I dunner whedder de neighbor 'oman like dis mighty well, but she 'uz monst'us perlite all de same.

"She 'low, 'Come right in, en take off yo' things en make yo'se'f at home. You 'll hatter skuzen my han's, kaze I 'm makin' up dough. Fling yo' bonnet on de bed dar, en take a seat en be seated.'

"Well, de tudder' 'oman, she sot dar en talk, en watch de neighbor 'oman mix dough fer de bread, en dey run'd on des like wimmin folks does. It seem like de neighbor 'oman got a bad col', en her eyes run water twel some un it crope down ter de een er her nose en hang dar. De tudder 'oman, she watch it, whiles dey er talkin'. De neighbor 'oman she work up de dough, en work it up, en talk. Sometimes she 'd hol' her head fum over de tray en talk, en den ag'in she 'd hol' it right spang over de dough, en shake 'er head en talk.

"Bimeby she 'low, 'Won't you stay ter dinner? I 'll have dis bread done in two shakes uv a sheep's tail.'

"De tudder 'oman say, 'I can't tell you, ma'am; it 's 'cordin' ter how de drap falls.'

"De tudder 'oman say, 'Dey ain't a cloud in de sky, so 't ain't gwine ter rain. You des ez well stay.'

"De tudder 'oman 'low, 'I done tole you de trufe; hit 's 'cordin' ter how de drap falls.'

"So, atter dat, when folks wan't right certain en sho' 'bout what dey gwine do, dey 'd up en say 't wuz 'cordin' ter how de drap fall."

"Well, how did it fall, Uncle Remus — in the bread-tray, or on the table, or on the floor?" the little boy inquired.

"Lawsy, honey!" responded the old man, "ef I 'uz er tell you, I 'd hatter dream it, en dreamin' ain't gwine do you er me any mo' good dan it done de nigger man what had de possum."

"I never heard of that," said the little boy.

"Oh, yes you is!" Uncle Remus asserted with some emphasis. "You been hearin' 'bout it off'n on sence you uz knee-high ter a duck, en you ain't much mo'n dat right now. No, suh! You des got de idee in yo' min' dat when I set down fer ter tell you sump'n hit 's bleedz ter be a tale, en when yuther folks tells it 't ain't nothin' but talk. I ain't got no secret 'bout dish yer nigger man what had de possum, but I tell you right now, 't ain't no tale. Too many folks done been fool wid it.

"Well, den, one time dey wuz a nigger man, en dish yer nigger man had a big fat possum en a half er peck er sweet 'taters.

He tuck de possum en de taters home, en he lay um down, — de possum on one side de fireplace en de taters on tudder side. Den he get some wood and chips en make 'im a fier, en den he fotch out de skillet. He put de possum in dar, he did, en he put de taters in de ashes close by fer ter keep 'im comp'ny. Den he raked out some hot embers en sot de skillet on um, en he put on de skillet led, en piled some embers 'pon topper dat.

"He sot dar, he did, en wait fer de possum fer ter git done, en whiles he wuz a-waitin' he struck up a song. Maybe you done hear it 'fo' now, but dat ain't make no diffunce ter me, kaze when I git started dis away, I 'm like de bull yearlin' gwine down de lane; dem what gits in de way gwine ter git run'd over — dey mos' sholy is!"

Uncle Remus leaned back in his chair, closed his eyes, and began to pat his foot. Then, after a little pause, he sang this fragment of a song: —

"Virginny cut, chaw terbacker,
Nigger dance ter merlatter;
Hoe de corn, dig er tater,
Plant terbacker, 't is no matter.

"Mix de meal, fry de batter,
Nigger dance ter merlatter;

Warm de cake in er platter,
Fry um in de cooney fat.

"Grab er tater out de ash,
Nigger dance ter merlatter;
Possum meat dar in der platter,
Shoo! he make de nigger fatter."

Uncle Remus's voice was full of melody, and he sang the song to a rollicking tune. The little boy was so much pleased that he asked the old man to sing it again.

"Bless yo' soul, honey. Ef I git in a fa'r way er singin', de niggers 'll all quit der work en crowd 'roun' here en jine in wid me, en we 'll have a reg'lar ole-timey camp-meetin' gwine on here 'fo' you know it. I ain't got no time fer dat.

"Now, den, dish yer nigger man, what I been tellin' you 'bout, he got his taters in de ashes en his possum in de skillet, en he sot dar en sing de song, en watch um all cook. Atter so long a time dey got done, en he pull de taters out'n de embers, en push de skillet 'way fum de fier. He 'low ter hisse'f, he did, dat col' possum is better'n hot possum, dough bofe un um is good nuff fer anybody. So he say he 'll des let it set dar en cool, en

soak in de gravy. Den he say he b'lieve he 'll do some noddin', kaze den he 'll dream he eatin' de possum, en den he 'll wake up en eat 'im sho nuff, en have de 'joyment er eatin 'im two times.

"Well, suh, dat des de way he done. He sot back in his cheer, de nigger man did, en he nodded en nodded, en he work his mouf des like he eatin' possum, en he grunt in his sleep like he feelin' good. But whiles he settin' dar sleepin', a nudder nigger man smell de possum, en he crope up ter de door en peep in. He seed how de lan' lay, en he slipped off his shoes en stole in. He lif' up de led er de skillet, en dar wuz de possum. He look on de side er de h'ath, en dar wuz de taters. Now, den, when dat de case, what gwine ter happen? Possum, en tater, en hongry nigger! Well, suh, de fust news you know, de possum wuz all bones, de taters wuz all peelin's, en de nigger wuz mo' dan a nigger. He fix de bones in one little pile, en he fix de peelin's in anudder little pile, en den he tuck some er de possum gravy en rub it on de tudder nigger's mouf en han's, en den he went on 'bout his business.

"'T wan't so mighty long atter dat 'fo' de

noddin' nigger wake up. He open his eyes, he did, en stretch hisse'f, en look at de skillet en laugh.

"He 'low, 'You er dar, is you? Well, I 'll tell you howdy now, en terreckly I 'll tell you good-by!'

"He tuck de led off'n de skillet, en dey ain't no possum dar. He look 'roun' fer de taters, en dey ain't no taters dar. Dey ain't nothin' dar but a pile er bones en a pile er tater-peelin's. De nigger sot down in his cheer en went ter studyin'. He look at his han's, en he see possum grease on um. He lick out his tongue, en he tas'e possum gravy on his mouf. He shuck his head en study. He look at his han's: 'Possum been dar!' He lick his mouf: 'Possum been dar, too!' He rub his stomach: 'But I be bless ef any possum been here!'"

XXI.

A FOOL FOR LUCK.

Uncle Remus did not pause to see whether the little boy liked the possum story or not. Perhaps he felt that it deserved no attention, being only a plantation joke — a remnant of a tale which had not sufficient interest to preserve it.

"Dat nigger man," he remarked, "wuz big 'nuff fool fer ter have mo' luck dan dat. You heern what de ole sayin' sez, 'fool fer luck en po' man fer chillun.' Well, one time dey wuz a man what do so funny dat folks call 'im a fool. He uz a hard workin' man, too, en he raise good craps, but he do like he cripple und' de hat. He had a crib full er co'n, en bimeby he 'gun ter miss it. He watch de crib at night en in de daytime, but he ain't see nobody takin' none, en de corn keep on gettin' lower en lower. De man live on de river, en on de yuther side de river dey wuz a big woods. Bimeby somebody tell de man dat

de squir'ls wuz totin' off his corn. De man laugh en say dat ef squir'ls kin tote off his corn, sev'm bushels at a time, dey er mo' dan welcome. But he watch all de same.

"He got up 'fo' day, en went en sot by de crib, en 't wan't long 'fo' he seed a sight dat make 'im rub his eyes. He hear a racket on de fence en a clatter in de bushes, en de squir'ls 'gun ter swarm 'roun' de crib, en all un um come fum to'rds de river. De man sot en watch um. Dey clum up in de crib, dey did, en eve'y blessed one un um tuck a year er corn in dey mouf en start back 'cross de river. De man foller 'long atter um.

"When dey git ter de river, dey put de corn down, en hunt 'roun' twel dey git a piece er bark. Dey put de bark in de water en lay de corn in it, den dey shove out fum sho, en h'ist der tails fer sails en go on 'cross. Eve'y one had a piece er bark, en dey ferry dat corn 'cross like dey done been use ter dat kinder business.

"De man, he sot dar like he dazed. He go back de nex' mornin' en watch, en he see de same kind er doin's. Eve'y squir'l tuck a year er corn, en eve'y squir'l got 'im a piece er bark, en h'ist his tail 'pon his back en sail

'cross de river. De man ain't say a word. He ain't so much ez shoo at um. He des set dar en watch um en laugh. Mo' dan dat, he went en tol' yuther folks 'bout it en laugh some mo'. Dey ax 'im why n't he make de squir'ls drap de corn, en he des wunk at um en grin. Den dey say he bleedz ter be a fool, en he wunk en laugh som mo'.

"Bimeby, when de corn 'gun ter git low in de crib, de man tuck his gun en his ax, en went 'cross de river fer ter look atter it. He wuz gwine 'long, huntin' fer de corn, when up jump a rabbit. He raise his gun en shot, en des ez he shot de rabbit run inter a covey er pa'tridges. At de shot a turkey gobbler flopped up en flew'd in a big poplar, en de man lammed loose wid de yuther barrel, en de gobbler drapt over en lodged up dar. Den he look over de groun' en fin' one dead rabbit, en lev'm dead pa'tridges. One pa'tridge had 'er wing broke, en she scrambled off in de bushes. De man foller'd on atter, en terreckly he come ter whar dey wuz a turkey nes' wid a hatful er turkey eggs.

"Den he clum up de tree fer ter git de turkey. When he got up dar, he see dat de turkey done drap in a hole like, en he pull 'er

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out, en down in dar wuz all his corn. He clum down, he did, en got de axe an 'gun ter cut de tree down. He ain't mo'n chopped thoo de bark 'fo' he seed sump'n nudder runnin' out, en he look at it close, en it uz de pyo honey.

"He 'low, 'Hi! I 'm gittin' de rent fer my corn!'

"Den he chopped him out a stob en plugged up de hole, en got his game en his turkey eggs, en put out fer home. Whiles he gwine back anudder rabbit jump up. De man ain't got no load in his gŭn, so he des flung de gun at 'im. De rabbit went on, but when de man start ter pick up de gun, he feel de groun' givin' way 'neat' his foots, en 'fo' he kin ketch hisse'f he done drapt down in a hole."

"Was it a big, deep hole?" the little boy inquired, with some show of eagerness.

"Well, suh, 't wuz over his head," responded Uncle Remus, vaguely. "It seem like some un had made de hole en kivered it wid' a plank, en den put dirt on de plank. It been done so long dat de man come 'long des in time fer ter fall thoo. When he 'gun ter fall, he make up his min' dat 't wuz all-night-Isom dar wid him. But he struck bottom

quicker'n he speckted he would, en when he git over his skeer he 'gun ter feel 'roun' fer ter see if it 's him er some yuther man what drapt in dar. Whiles he uz feelin' 'roun' fer ter see see who he wuz, en whar he wuz, en what he doin' dar, he put his han' on sump'n hard en col'.

"Yasser! right den en dar he put his han' on sump'n hard en col' — en what you reckon it was? Nothin' in de roun' worl' but a keg er money! He scrambled out er dar, atter he lif' de keg out, en den he roll it down to his canoe, en tuck it home. He count it up, de man did, en he fin' he got forty-lev'm hundr'd dollars in hard speeshy. Wen he git rested, he tuck his hoss en waggin en a empty bar'l, en went 'roun' by de bridge, en back ter de place whar he fin' de honey. He pull de plug out'n de tree en let de honey run in de bar'l twel it 's full, en den he tuck it home en fetch back two mo' bar'ls, en got dem full. Hit went on dis away twel he got I dunner how many bar'ls er honey. En den, when he cut down de tree en haul de corn home, he fin' he got mo' dan he had at fust, kaze de squir'ls been stealin' somebody else corn 'long wid his'n!

"So den, dar he wuz, wid ez much money

ez he want, en mo' honey dan a drove er mules kin pull, en mo' corn dan what he had befo', en all de game he want, en all bekaze he de biggest fool in sev'm Nunited States."

Seeing that the little boy was disposed to regard his story somewhat dubiously, Uncle Remus made this concluding remark: —

"Tooby sho, dis ain't no creetur tale, but ef 't ain't so, how come folks talkin' 'bout it yit? I wish you be so good ez ter tell me dat."

But the little boy was not prepared to argue the matter.

XXII.

THE MAN AND HIS BOOTS.

"You done hear me say dat de creeturs is got mos' ez much sense ez folks, ain't you, honey?" inquired Uncle Remus, one day, when he and the little boy were alone together. The youngster nodded assent. "Well, den," said the old man solemnly, "I 'm bleedz ter tell you dat sense don't stan' fer goodness. De creeturs dunno nothin' 'tall 'bout dat dat 's good en dat dat ain't good. Dey dunno right fum wrong. Dey see what dey want, en dey git it ef dey kin, by hook er by crook. Dey don't ax who it b'longs ter, ner wharbouts it come fum. Dey dunno de diffunce 'twix what 's dern en what ain't dern.

"Miss Sally say no longer'n yistiddy, dat I 'd keep on tellin' you deze creetur tales twel bimeby you 'll git mix up in de min' en fergit all 'bout yo' Sunday-school lesson; but I laid down dis pint ter Miss Sally, dat ef a chap 'bout yo' age en size dunno de diffunce 'twix

creetur doin's en folks' doins', he better be turned out ter graze. I ain't tellin' you deze tales on account er what de creeturs does, I 'm a tellin' um on account er de way de creeturs does. How de name er goodness kin folks go on en steal en tell fibs, like de creeturs done, en not git hurted? Dey des can't do it. Dead dog never dies, en cheatin' never th'ives — not when folks git at it.

"One time," Uncle Remus continued, after delivering this little sermon, "dey wuz a man what hear talk er some er Brer Rabbit's doin's — how he lay down in de road whiles a man wuz gwine 'long wid some fishes in a waggin, en how he run 'roun' en lay down ag'in; en keep on doin' dat twel bimeby de man went back atter de fust rabbit he seed, en den Brer Rabbit had a chance fer ter git de fishes — I done mos' fergit dat ar tale off'n my min'. But howsomever hit wuz, de man done hear tell 'bout it, en he 'low ter hisse'f dat he des ez smart ez what Brer Rabbit is.

"So, one day, he got 'im a bran new pa'r er boots wid red tops on um, en whiles he settin' side er de road looking at um, he hear somebody comin' 'long in a waggin. He know'd who de somebody wuz, kaze he seed um on de rise er de hill.

"De man in de waggin had some calico fer ter make his wife a dress, en some blue chany ware fer ter put in de cubberd. De man what had de boots, he tuck'n flung one un um in de road, en hid hisse'f in de bushes fer ter see what de tudder man gwine do.

"Well, suh, de man in de waggin, he come 'long, en he see de boot in de road. He holler at his hoss fer ter 'w'o dar!' en he look at de boot right hard, like he studyin'.

"He 'low, 'Ef dey wuz two un you, I 'd take you, but one boot ain't gwine do nobody no good, 'ceppin hit 's a wooden-legged man.'

"So he driv on, en de man what lay de boot dar, he put out en went on ahead en flung de yuther boot in de road. De man in de waggin, he come 'long, he did, en he see de yuther boot.

"He 'low, 'Heyo! dish yer boot makes tudder boot good. W'o, dar, hoss! I 'll go back en git 'er.'

"Wid dat, he drapt de lines on de dashboard en went back atter de odd boot. Whiles he gone, de man what had de boots tuck de calico en de crockery en made off wid um.

"He hid um in de underbresh, en den he come back en lissen fer ter see what de yuther

man gwine do. Well, suh, de yuther man come back wid de boot, en den he had two. Time he clum in de waggin he seed dat somebody done steal his calico en his crockery, but he ain't say nothin'. He des look at de boots en laugh.

"De man in de bushes ain't know what ter make er dis. He stood dar, he did, en scratch his head en study. He watch de yuther man, en fur ez he kin see him he wuz lookin' at de boots en laughin'. De man in de bushes say he gwineter see what de matter wid dem ar boots, when de yuther man in de waggin kin swap off calico en crockery fer um en still feel good 'nuff fer ter laugh. So de man in de bushes he run 'roun' en head de yuther man off, en met 'im in de road. He come drivin' 'long, still lookin' at de boots en laughin'. Look like when he see de man in de road it make 'im laugh wusser dan befo'.

"De man in de road 'low, 'You mus' be havin' a mighty heap er fun all by yo'se'f.'

"De man in de waggin laugh like he gwine ter bus' wide open. All he kin say is, 'Lawsy massy! deze boots! deze boots! deze boots!'

"De man in de road 'low, 'What de matter

wid de boots, dat dey er so mighty funny? Dey ain't look funny ter me.'

"De man in de waggin look like he choke wid laughin. When he ketch his breff he holler, 'Oh, deze boots! deze boots!'

"Man in de road 'low, 'You ain't gwine crazy, is you?'

"Man in de waggin say, 'You 'd be crazy too ef somebody had 'a' come 'long en drapt deze boots whar you could git um. Lawsy massy! deze boots!'

"Man in de road 'low, 'What kinder doin's is deze? You better lemme git up dar en take you home ter yo' fambly!'

"Man in de waggin say, 'My folks 'll laugh too, when dey know what I knows; en you 'd laugh yo'se'f ef you 'd 'a' been comin' 'long de road en fin' deze boots what got red in de top.'

"Man in de road say, 'I had a pair des like um, en day ain't make me laugh.'

"Man in de waggin say, 'You 'd laugh wusser dan me ef you 'd er pick deze boots up in de road en foun' one ten dollar bill in one un um, en anudder ten dollar bill in tudder one.'

"Man in de road 'low, 'Lemme see dem

boots! — Dey er mine! Han' um here! I tuck'n los' um yistiddy whiles I comin' fum town. Gi' me de money!'

"Man in de waggin shet his eye. He say, 'You right sho' dey er yone?'

"Man in de road 'low, 'Yes dey is, en I got de proof um it!'

"Man in de waggin say, 'Well en good! Git up here en go along wid me, en show de proof.'

"Man in de road jump up on de wheel, but 'fo' he kin set down de man in de waggin flung 'im back in de waggin body en jump on 'im en tie 'im, en tuck 'im off ter de calaboose. Dar dey make 'im tell what he done wid de calico en de chany ware, en dey kep' 'im, I dunner how long; en 'fo' dey turn him loose dey tuck 'im out en hit 'im thirty-nine on de naked hide.

"Co'se," continued Uncle Remus, seeing a shade of perplexity on the little boy's face, "de man in de waggin ain't fin' no money in de boots. He des puttin' on, so he kin fin' de man what drap um, kaze he know dat right whar he fin' de man dat drap um, right dar he 'll fin' de man what stoled his calico en crockery. Dat what make I say dat folks

ain't got no business mockin' de way de creeturs does. Dey er bound ter git cotch up wid, en right den dey er in deep trouble. Creeturs kin take what ain't dern, en tell fibs, en dey don't no harm come fum it; but when folks tries it, dey er bleedz ter come ter some bad eend. Now, you des watch um."

XXIII.

BROTHER MUD TURTLE'S TRICKERY.

"I DON'T like deze yer tales 'bout folks, no how you kin fix um," said Uncle Remus, after an unusually long pause, during which he rubbed his left hand with the right, in order to run the rheumatism out. "No, suh, I don't like um, kaze folks can't play no tricks, ner git even wid der neighbors, widout hurtin' somebody's feelin's, er breakin' some law er nudder, er gwine 'ginst what de preacher say.

"Look at dat man what I des been tellin' you 'bout. He let de udder man fool 'im en ketch 'im, en mo' dan dat, he let um tote 'im off de calaboose. He oughter been tuck dar; I ain't 'sputin' dat, yit ef dat had been some er de creeturs, dey 'd er sholy got loose fum dar.

"When it comes ter talkin' 'bout gittin' loose," Uncle Remus continued, settling himself comfortably in his chair, "I git ter runnin' on in my min' 'bout ole Brer Fox en

ole Brer Mud Turkle. Dey had some kinder fallin' out once 'pon a time. I dunner what. I speck hit 's got a tale hung on it, but de tale done switch itself out'n my min'. Yit dey 'd done had a fallin' out, en dey want no love los' betwixt um. Well, suh, one day Brer Fox wuz gwine down de creek fishin'. Little ez you may think un it, Brer Fox was monst'us fon' er fishes, so eve'y chance he got he 'd go fishin'."

"On Sunday, too?" inquired the little boy. He had been lectured on that subject not long before.

"Well, I tell you now," replied Uncle Remus, laughing, "Brer Fox is like 'oman's tongue, he ain't got no Sunday."

"What kind of bait did he have?" the youngster asked.

"What he want wid bait, honey? He ain't got no bait, en no pole, en no hook. He des went down de creek, en when he come ter a good place, he 'd wade in en feel und' de rocks en und' de bank. Sometimes he 'd ketch a horny-head, en den ag'in he 'd ketch a peerch. Well, suh, he went on en went on, en he had bad luck. Look like de fishes wuz all gone fum home, but he kep' on, en kep'

on. He 'low ter hisse'f dat he bleedz ter have some fish fer dinner. One time he put his han' in a crawfish nes' en got nipt, en anudder time he tetched a eel, en it made de col' chills run 'cross 'im. Yit he kep' on.

"Bimeby Brer Fox come ter whar ole Brer Mud Turkle live at. I dunner what make ole Brer Mud Turkle live in such a damp place like dat. Look like him en his folks 'ud have a bad col' de whole blessid time. But dar he wuz in de water und' de bank, layin' dar fas' asleep, dreamin' 'bout de good times he 'd have when de freshet come. He 'uz layin' dar wid his eyes shot, when de fus' news he know he feel sump'n nudder fumblin' 'roun' his head. 'T wan't nobody but ole Brer Fox feelin' 'roun' und' de bank fer fishes.

"Brer Mud Turkle move his head, he did, but de fumblin' kep' on, en bimeby he open his mouf en Brer Fox fumble en fumble, twel bimeby he got 'is han' in dar, en time he do dat, ole Brer Mud Turkle shet down on it. En I let you know," continued Uncle Remus, shaking his head slowly from side to side as if to add emphasis to the statement, "I let you know when ole Brer Mud Turkle shet down on yo' han', you got ter cut off his

head, en den wait twel it thunder 'fo' he turn loose.

"Well, suh, he shet down on ole Brer Fox, en ef you 'd 'a' been anywhars in dat settlement you 'd 'a' heard squallin' den ef you ain't never hear none befo'.

"Brer Fox des hilt his head back en holler 'Ouch! Ouch! What dis got me? Ouch! Turn me aloose! Ouch! Somebody better run here quick! Laws a massy! Ouch!'

"But Brer Mud Turkle, he helt on, en he feel so much comfort dat he 'd er in about went ter asleep ag'in ef Brer Fox had n't er snatched en jerked so hard en a-holler'd so loud.

"Brer Fox holler, en Brer Mud Turkle hol' on — Brer Fox holler, en Brer Mud Turkle hol' on. Dar dey wuz — nip en tug, holler en hol' fas'! Bimeby it hurt so bad dat Brer Fox des fetched one loud squall en made one big pull, en out come ole Brer Mud Turkle, a-hangin' ter his han'.

"Well, suh, when dey got out on de bank en Brer Mud Turkle sorter woke up, he tuck'n turn Brer Fox loose widout waitin' fer de thunder. He ax Brer Fox pardon, but Brer Fox, he ain't got no pardon fer ter gi' 'im.

"Brer Mud Turkle make like he skeer'd. He 'low, 'I 'clar' ter gracious, Brer Fox! Ef I 'd a know'd 't wuz you, I 'd 'a' never shet down on you in de roun' worl'; kaze I know what a dangersome man you is. I know'd yo' daddy befo' you, en he wuz a dangersome man.'

"But Brer Fox 'fuse ter lissen ter dat kinder talk. He say, 'I been wantin' you a long time, en now I got you. I got you right where I want you, en when I git thoo wid you, yo' own folks would n't know you, ef dey wuz ter meet you in de middle er de road.'

"Brer Mud Turkle cry on one side his face en laugh on tudder. He 'low, 'Please, suh, Brer Fox, des let me off dis time, en I 'll be good friend 'long wid you all de balance er de time. Please, suh, Brer Fox, let me off dis time!'

"Brer Fox say, 'Oh, yes! I 'll let you off, I 'm all de time a-lettin' off folks what bite me ter de bone! Oh, yes! I 'll let you off, but I 'll take en skin you fust.'

"Brer Mud Turkle 'low, 'Spozen I ain't got no hide on me — den what you gwine to do?'

"Brer Fox grit his tushes. He say, 'Ef you ain't got no hide, I 'll fin' de place whar de hide oughter be — dat 's what!'

"Wid dat, he make a grab at Brer Mud Turkle's neck, but Brer Mud Turkle draw his head en his foots und' his shell, en quile up his tail, en dar he wuz. He so ole and tough he got moss on his shell. Brer Fox fool wid 'im, en gnyaw en gouge at de shell, but he des might ez well gnyaw en gouge at a flint rock. He work en he work, but 't ain't do no good; he can't git Brer Mud Turkle out er his house no way he kin fix it.

"Ole Brer Mud Turkle talk at 'im. He 'low, 'Hard ain't no name fer it, Brer Fox! You 'll be jimber-jaw'd long 'fo' you gnyaw thoo my hide!'

"Brer Fox gnyaw en gouge, en gouge en gnyaw.

"Brer Mud Turkle 'low, 'Dey ain't but one way fer ter git dat shell off, Brer Fox!'

"Brer Fox 'fuse ter make answer. He gouge en gynaw, en gnyaw en gouge.

"Brer Mud Turkle 'low, 'Tushes ain't gwine git it off! Claws ain't gwine git it off! Yit mud en water will do de work. Now I 'm gwine ter sleep.'

"Brer Fox gnyaw en gouge, en gouge en gnyaw, en bimeby he git tired, mo' speshually when he hear ole Brer Mud Turkle layin' in dar snorin' des like somebody sawin' gourds. Den he sot down en watch Brer Mud Turkle, but he ain't move. He do des like he sleep.

"Den Brer Fox git de idee dat he 'll play a trick on Brer Mud Turkle. He holler out, 'Good-by, Brer Mud Turkle! You er too much fer me dis time. My han' hurt me so bad, I got ter go home en git a poultice on it. But I 'll pay you back ef hit 's de las' ac'!'

"Brer Fox make like he gwine off, but he des run 'roun' en hid in de bushes. Yit does you speck he gwine fool Brer Mud Turkle? Shoo, honey! Dat creetur got moss on his back, en he got so much sense in his head his eyes look red. He des lay dar, ole Brer Mud Turkle did, en sun hisse'f same ez ef he wuz on a rock in de creek. He lay dar so still dat Brer Fox got his impatients stirred up, en he come out de bushes en went ter Brer Mud Turkle en shuck 'im up en ax'd 'im how he gwine git de shell off.

"Brer Mud Turkle 'low, 'Tushes ain't gwine git it off! Claws ain't gwine git it off! Yit mud en water will do de work!'

"Brer Fox say, 'Don't riddle me no riddles. Up en tell me like a man how I gwine ter git yo' shell off!'

"Brer Mud Turkle 'low, 'Put me in de mud en rub my back hard ez you kin. Den de shell bleedz ter come off. Dat de reason dey calls me Brer Mud Turkle.'

"Well, suh," said Uncle Remus, laughing heartily, "Brer Fox ain't got no better sense dan ter b'lieve all dat truck, so he tuck en shove Brer Mud Turkle 'long twel he got 'im in de mud, en den he 'gun ter rub on his back like somebody curryin' a hoss. What happen den? Well, dey ain't nothin' 't all happen, 'ceppin' what bleedz ter happen. De mo' he rub on de back, de deeper Brer Mud Turkle go in de mud. Bimeby, whiles Brer Fox wuz rubbin' right hard, Brer Mud Turkle sorter gun hisse'f a flirt en went down out er reach. Co'se dis make Brer Fox splunge in de water, en a little mo' en he 'd a drown'ded right den en dar. He went out on de bank, he did, en whiles he settin' dar dryin' hisse'f he know'd dat Brer Mud Turkle wuz laughin' at 'im, kaze he kin see de signs un it."

The little boy laughed, but he shook his head incredulously.

"Well," said Uncle Remus, "ef you gwine ter 'spute dat, you des ez well ter stan' up en face me down 'bout de whole tale. Kaze when Brer Fox see bubbles risin' on de water en follerin' atter one anudder he bleedz ter know dat Brer Mud Turkle down under dar laughin' fit ter kill hisse'f."

This settled the matter. The child was convinced.

XXIV.

HOW THE KING RECRUITED HIS ARMY.

One day Uncle Remus had occasion several times to go to his "Miss Sally" with information about some incident, accident, or happening on the plantation. Each time his mistress would say, "Did n't I tell you so?" She had, in fact, said to him the night before, when the little boy's father was preparing to take a short journey away from home, that she was certain everything would go to ruin on the place. Uncle Remus, on the other hand, had assured her that everything would go along all right. It happened, however, that everything seemed to go wrong. A mule ran over a calf and hurt it. A cow trying to get out of the way of the mule had her horn knocked off, and the mule, a little later, snagged itself on the end of a fence rail. Consequently, when Uncle Remus went to tell his mistress of these things, making three several visits, the

lady exclaimed, with increasing emphasis each time, "Did n't I tell you so?"

Finally Uncle Remus remarked, as he was going away: "Nex' time I come, Miss Sally, I 'm gwine ter tell you de cow done swaller'd de grinestone."

Whereat his mistress laughed and told him not to worry her any more. The little boy happened to hear the remark about the cow swallowing the grindstone, and so he followed the old man to find out something about it.

"Dat what you taggin' atter me 'bout?" said Uncle Remus. "Well, goodness knows! it done got so now dat folks can't open der mouf but what dey got ter be tagged at, en nagged at, kaze udder folks git de idee dat dey 's a tale some'rs behime it. I thank my stars dey ain't no tale in dat grinestone, kaze dey ain't no livin' man kin set flat down en tell tales while dish yer plantation gwine ter rack en ruin. Marse John 'll row me up de river when he come back here en fin' de whole blessid place turned wrongsud-outerds. I 'm dat pestered I dunner whedder I 'm eend uperds er eend downerds!"

"Well, Uncle Remus," persisted the little boy, "how can a cow swallow a grindstone?"

"Dar now!" exclaimed the old man, stopping suddenly and staring at the child; "des lissen at dat! No wonder I 'm gittin' bal'-headed en wobbly in de legs. Mules en cows gwine ter rack, Miss Sally hollerin' 'I tole you so!' en chilluns gwine 'roun' axin' 'bout cows swallin' grinestones. Ef dat ain't 'nuff fer ter run anybody ravin' 'stracted, I wish you 'd tell me what is!"

"Well, you said something to mamma about a cow swallowing a grindstone," remarked the boy, confidently.

"Oh!" said Uncle Remus, "dat 's diffunt! Now I know what you talkin' 'bout! Man, suh! you had me skeer'd. My min' wuz up yander at de corn-crib wid dat fool mule what snag hisse'f, en when I hear you talk 'bout cow eatin' grinestone, I 'lowed dat I had mo' trouble on my han's. Dat what I tole Miss Sally ain't got no tale behime it. Hit 's des a sayin'.

"It seem like dey wuz a man, which had a wife, en eve'y time sump'n 'd happen, she up en 'low, 'I tole you so!' Hit kep on dis away, twel one day dish yer man seed de cow run thoo de yard en turn over de grinestone. So de man, he run en tell his wife dat de cow

done swaller'd de grinestone, en she up'n say, 'I tole you so!' "

But, after all, the saying reminded Uncle Remus of a story, and he told it by fits and starts, while he was looking after the welfare of the wounded mule, and the crippled calf, and the cow with the broken horn.

"One time, dey wuz a boy, en dish yer boy wuz mighty smart. He wuz like a slick thrip — little but ole. I dunner what dey call 'im in dem times, but in deze days we 'd call 'im a runt, en laugh at 'im. Well, dish yer boy had a head on 'im. He look like he dried up, but nummine dat. Dem what got ahead er 'im had ter git up long 'fo' day, en ef dey ain't take keer dey 'd fin' 'im up befo' um.

"One season, when de blackberries wuz ripe, he went 'roun' en tole de folks dat ef dey 'd take der baskets en der buckets en go out en git de blackberries, he 'd gi' um half dey pick. Hit been so seldom dat de folks git a chance fer ter make any extry money dat dey mighty glad ter have de chance ter pick blackberries. So dey all went out en pick en pick, twel dey pick two waggin loads un um. Well, dis yer swunk up boy, which he look like he ain't got no sense skacely, he 'vide fa'r,

dey ain't no two ways 'bout dat. He tuck half en gi' um der half back."

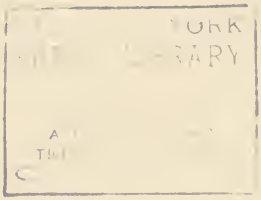
"What was his name, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy, somewhat interested in this remarkable transaction.

"Linktum Lidy Lody," the old man answered promptly. "I had de idee I done tole you dat. But nummine! Dat what dey call 'im, en dat what he call hisse'f — Linktum Tidlum Tidy. Hit run 'long so funny dat I dunner wharbouts de fergiven name stops at en wharbouts de fambly name begins at. Fer short en sweet dey call 'im Tinktum Tidy.

"Well, dish yer Tinktum Tidlum, he 'vide out f'ar wid de folks. He tuck his half er de blackberries en gi' um der half. Dey want no 'sputin' 'bout it. But den when de folks git der half, dey ax deyse'f what dey gwine do wid it. Dey want ter sell it ter Tinktum Tidy, but he 'low he got des ez much blackberries ez he know what ter do wid. Atter a while de folks say dat ef dey can't sell der share er de blackberries, dey des ez well put um in Tinktum Tidy's pile, en dat what dey done; en den he tuck de two waggin loads to town en sold um fer de cash money.

"Bimeby some er de mo' longer headed

A LANE LEADING TO SNAP BEAN FARM



folks sot down en got ter studyin' 'bout it, en dey ax deyse'f how come dey got ter go out en pick blackberries fer dat little bit er swunk up chap. Dey study en study, but de mo' dey study de mo' foolish dey feel.

"Well, suh, de tale got out, en it travel 'roun' en 'roun' twel de King got wind un it, en he tuck en sont fer Tinktum Tidy. Dis make de folks what pick de blackberries mighty glad, kaze dey got de idee dat de King gwine ter put de little swunk up chap in de calaboose fer foolin' um. But Tinktum Tidy ain't skeer'd. He wrop up a change er cloze in his hankcher, en put out ter whar de King stay at. Some er de folks went 'long fer ter see what gwine ter come er de little swunk up chap what fool um.

"Bimeby dey got ter whar de King live, en Tinktum Tidy des march right 'long in, en tole um dat de King done sont fer 'im. Dey tuck 'im in a big room whar dey wuz a whole passel er yuther folks, en tole 'im ter wait dar twel de King come. Eve'ybody look at 'im hard, he wuz so swunk up en puny, en he look right back at um, des like he wuz one er de quality. Atter while, here come de King. Time he got settled on de flatform, his eye

drapt on Tinktum Tidy, en he ax what dat ar runt doin' dar.

"Dey up'n tell de King dat dat 's de chap what make de folks pick so much blackberries. When de King hear dis, he lay back en laugh fit ter kill hisse'f. He call Tinktum Tidy up en ax 'im all 'bout how he been doin', en den he 'low, de King did, dat Tinktum Tidy mus' be mighty smart. But Tinktum Tidy, he say dat 't ain't him dat 's smart, hit 's de folks what pick de blackberries, kaze folks what kin pick dat much in so little time is bleedz ter be smart.

"Den de King run his han' in his pocket en pull out lev'm grains er corn. He 'low, 'Take dish yer corn en do what you please wid it, but de crap I want fum it is 'lev'm strong men fer ter put in my army.'

"Tinktum Tidy tuck de corn en tie it up in one cornder er his hankcher. He 'low, 'Not countin' harrycanes en high water, I 'll be back in a fortnight. Ef 'lev'm strong men wuz ez easy ter pick ez blackberries, I 'd sen' some yuther folks, but I 'll hatter go atter de men myse'f.'

"Wid dat he make his bow, he did, en tuck his foot in his han' en put out. He travel all

dat day, en 'bout night he come ter a tavern, en dar he stop. De man ax 'im whar he come fum, what his name, en whar he gwine. He say he come fum Chuckerluckertown, en he name Tinktum Tidy, en he gwine on a long journey. When bedtime come, he call de man in de room en show 'im de corn.

"He 'low, 'Here de 'lev'm grains er corn de King gi' me. I 'll lay it on de table. I 'm feard de Big Gander gwine ter eat it.'

"De man say he 'll shet de door so de Big Gander can't git it. Den dey all went ter bed. Tinktum Tidy wait twel eve'ybody got still, en den he got up en drapt de corn thoo de crack er de floor. Den he went ter sleep.

"Nex' mornin' he wake up soon en 'larm de neighborhood. He holler out: 'I tole you so! I tole you so! De Big Gander done eat de 'lev'm grains er corn what de King gi' me! De Big Gander done eat de 'lev'm grains er corn de King gi' me!'

"Tinktum Tidy holler so loud en so long dat he skeer de man. Den de man's ole 'oman, she stuck 'er head out de winder en sot up a squall.

"She say, 'Take de Big Gander en go on off fum here! Take 'im en go!'

"Tinktum Tidy tuck de Big Gander und' his arm en went polin' down de big road. He travel all dat day twel night, en he come ter anudder town, en he went en put up at de tavern. When bedtime come, he tied de gander by de leg ter de bedstid, en den he call de man.

"Here de Big Gander dat eat 'lev'm grains er corn dat de King gi' me. I 'll tie 'im here, kaze I 'm feard de Boo-Boo Black Sheep 'll kill 'im.'

"Man say, 'Black Sheep can't git 'im here.'

"In de middle er de night Tinktum Tidy got up en broke de Big Gander's neck en flung 'im out in de barn-yard. Nex' mornin' he got up soon, en 'gun ter holler.

He 'low, 'I tole you so! I tole you so! Boo-Boo Black Sheep done kill de Big Gander dat eat the 'lev'm grains er corn de King gi' me!'

"When de man hear talk er de King, he got skeer'd. Hit make 'im shake in his shoes. He say, 'Take Boo-Boo Black Sheep en go 'long! You done fetch me bad luck!'

"Den Tinktum Tidy fastened Boo-Boo Black Sheep wid a rope, en led 'im off down de big road. Bimeby he come ter whar dey wuz anudder town, en he went en put up at

de tavern. When bedtime come he call de man.

"He 'low, 'Here Boo-Boo Black Sheep dat kill de Big Gander, dat eat de 'lev'm grains er corn de King gi' me. I 'll tie 'im here ter de bedstid kaze I 'm feard de Brindle Cow 'll hook 'im.'

"Man say, 'Brindle Cow can't git 'im in here.'

"'Twix' midnight en day, Tinktum Tidy got up en kill de Black Sheep en put 'im in de lot wid de Brindle Cow. Den he got up soon in de mornin', en 'gun ter holler.

"He 'low, 'I tole you so! I tole you so! De Brindle Cow done kill Boo-Boo Black Sheep dat kill de Big Gander dat eat de 'lev'm grains er corn de King gi' me!'

"Dis make de man feel skeer'd. He say, 'Take de Brindle Cow en go!'

"Tinktum Tidy led de Brindle Cow off down de road en make his way ter de nex' town. He got dar by de time night come, en put up at de tavern. When bedtime come, he tuck en call de man.

"He 'low, 'Here de Brindle Cow dat kill de Boo-Boo Black Sheep dat kill de Big Gander dat eat de 'lev'm grains er corn de King

gi' me. I 'll tie 'er here by de chimbley, whar de Roan Hoss can't git 'er.'

"De man say, 'I know mighty well de Roan Hoss can't git 'er here.'

"Des 'fo' day Tinktum Tidy tuck de Brindle Cow in de stable en made way wid 'er. Den when daylight come he 'gun ter holler.

"He 'low, 'I tole you so! I tole you so! De Roan Hoss done kill de Brindle Cow dat kill de Boo-Boo Black Sheep dat kill de Big Gander dat eat the 'lev'm grains er corn de King gi' me.'

"De man git skeer'd when he hear de name er de King, en he say, 'Take de Roan Hoss en go on whar you gwine!'

"Tinktum Tidy got on de Roan Hoss en went trottin' down de big road. He went on en went on, he did, twel he come ter a place whar he had ter cross a creek. Close by de road he seed a ole man settin'. He look at de ole man en de ole man look at 'im.

"Bimeby de ole man say, 'Howdy, son!' Tinktum Tidy say, 'Howdy, Gran'sir!'

"De ole man 'low, 'Son, come wipe my eyes!'

"Tinktum Tidy say, 'I 'll wipe um, Gran'sir, ef so be it 'll do you any good.' Den he

got down off'n de Roan Hoss en wipe de ole man's eyes.

"De ole man say, 'Thanky-do, son! thanky-do!' Tinktum Tidy say, 'You er mo' dan welcome, Gran'sir!' Den he got on de Roan Hoss en wuz 'bout ter ride off.

"De ole man 'low, 'Son, come scratch my head!'

"Tinktum Tidy say, 'I 'll scratch yo' head, Gran'sir, ef so be it 'll do you any good.' Den he got down off'n de Roan Hoss en scratch de ole man's head.

"De ole man say, 'Thanky-do, son! thanky-do!' Tinktum Tidy say, 'You er mo' dan welcome, Gran'sir!'

"Den he start fer ter ride off ag'in, but de ole man 'low, 'Son, come he'p me up!'

"Tinktum Tidy say, 'I 'll he'p you up, Gran'sir, ef so be it 'll do you any good!'

"So he went en he'ped 'im up, en it seem like dat when de ole man got on his foots his strenk come back. He straighten up, he did, en look lots younger dan what he did.

"He 'low, 'Son, I been settin' here gwine on ten year, en you er de onliest one dat ever do what I ax um. Some laugh at me, en some cuss at me, but all went on der way, en eve'y

one dat pass fell in wid 'lev'm robbers what live down de road a piece en got robbed. Now bein's ez you done what I axt you, I 'm mo' dan willin' fer ter do what you ax me.'

"Wid dat, Tinktum Tidy up en tole de ole man how come he ter be gwine 'long dar, en 'bout how de King want 'im ter fetch back 'lev'm strong men fer ter go in de army.

"De ole man 'low, 'Son, dey er waitin' fer you right down de road. Keep right on twel you come ter whar dey 's a big white house. Ride 'roun' dat house sev'm times one way en sev'm times de udder way, en say de words dat come in yo' head. Don't git skeer'd, kase I won't be so mighty fur off.'

"Tinktum Tidy rid off down de road, he did, en went on twel he come ter de big white house. Den he rid 'roun' it sev'm times one way en sev'm times de udder way.

"He 'low, 'Dis is de Roan Hoss dat kill de Brindle Cow dat kill de Boo-Boo Black Sheep dat kill de Big Gander dat eat de 'lev'm grains er corn de King gi' me. I want 'lev'm strong men fer de King's army.'

"En bless yo' soul, honey!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, by way of emphasis, "de door er de big white house flew'd open, en 'lev'm strong

men come marchin' out. By dat time de ole man had come up, en dey ax 'im what dey mus' do.

"He 'low, 'Mount yo' hosses, sons, en go jine de King's army!'

"So dey went, en de King wuz mighty proud. He look 'roun' at eve'ybody en say, 'I tole you so!' en he fix it up so dat Tinktum Tidy hed des ez much ez he kin eat en w'ar, en mighty little work fer ter do all de balance er his days."

HIS SONGS AND BALLADS.

HIS SONGS AND BALLADS.

I.

THE PLOUGH-HANDS' SONG.

[The italics serve to mark what may be called the refrain choruses. The variable nature of these gives unexpected coloring, not to say humor, to the songs in which they occur. Any typographical arrangement of these choruses must be, in the very nature of things, awkward and ineffective.]

I.

NIGGER mighty happy w'en he layin' by co'n —
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
Nigger mighty happy w'en he year de dinner-ho'n —
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
En he mo' happy still w'en de night draws on —
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
Dat sun 's a-slantin' des ez sho 's you bo'n!
En it 's rise up, Primus! fetch anudder yell:
Dat ole dun cow des a-shakin' up 'er bell,
En de frogs chunin' up 'fo' de jew done fell:
Good-night, Mr. Killdee! I wish you mighty well!
— Mr. Killdee! I wish you mighty well!
I wish you mighty well!

II.

De co'n 'll be ready 'g'inst dumplin' day,
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
But nigger gotter watch, en stick, en stay,
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
Same ez de bee-martin watchin' un de jay,
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
Dat sun 's a-slantin' en a-slippin' away!
Den it 's rise up, Primus! en gin it t' um strong:
De cow 's gwine home wid der ding-dang-dong;
Sling in anudder tetch er de ole time song:
Good-night, Mr. Whipperwill! don't stay long!
— Mr. Whipperwill! don't stay long!
— Don't stay long!

III.

De shadders, dey er creepin' todes de top er de hill,
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
But night don't 'stroy w'at de day done buil',
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
'Less de noddin' er de nigger give de ash-cake a chill —
Dat sun 's a-slantin';
Dat sun 's a-slantin' en slippin' down still!
Den sing it out, Primus! des holler en bawl,
En w'ilst we er strippin' deze mules fer de stall,
Let de gals ketch de soun' er de plantashun call;
Oh, it 's good-night ladies! my love unter you all!
— Ladies! my love unter you all!
— My love unter you all!

II.

A SONG OF THE MOLE.

(Putnam County, Georgia. 1862.)

De jay-bird hunt de sparrer-nes',
De bee-martin sail all 'roun',
De squir'l, he holler fum de top er de tree,
Mr. Mole, he stay in de groun';
He hide en he stay twel de dark drap down;
Mr. Mole, he stay in de groun'.

De w'ipperwill holler fum 'cross de fence;
He got no peace er min';
Mr. Mole, he grabble en he dig twel he lan'
Un'need [1] de sweet-tater vine;
He lan' down dar whar no sun ain't shine,
Un'need de sweet-tater vine.

De sparrer-hawk whet his bill on de rail;
Oh, ladies, lissen unter me!
Mr. Mole, he handle his two little spade,
Down dar whar no eye kin see.
He dig so fur en he dig so free,
Down dar whar no eye kin see.

De nigger, he wuk twel de dark drap down,
En den Mr. Mole is he;

[1] Underneath.

He sing his song de whole night long,
Whar de patter-roller [1] never kin see;
He sing en he play — oh, gals, go 'way!
Whar de patter-roller never kin see.

III.

"OH, GIMME DE GAL!"

I.

De boss, he squall ter de rompin' boys:
Don't bodder dat jug in de spring!
De jug, he guggle out *good-good-good!*
Nigger, he holler en sing:
Oh, gimme de gal, de big greasy gal,
W'at wrop up 'er ha'r wid a string!

II.

Little bird flutter w'en de big speckle hawk
Sail up en light in de pine;
W'en de overseer come en look thoo de fence,
Nigger don't cut no shine,
But he roll up he eye, en he break loose en sing:
En I wish dat big gal 'uz mine!

III.

Oh, de speckle hawk light in de top er de pine,
En dar he set en swing;
De overseer lean his chin on de fence,
And lissen at de cotton-choppers sing;

[1] Patrol.

A NEGRO CABIN ON SNAP BEAN FARM

ORK
BRARY

Don't nobody bodder dat sway-back gal
W'at wrop up 'er ha'r wid a string!

IV.

Oh, de strappin' black gal, de big greasy gal!
She kyar herse'f mighty fine!
How de boys gwineter foller along in de row,
A-waitin' fer ter ketch her sign?
De boss mighty close, yit I study en I wish —
En I wish dat big gal 'uz mine!

IV.

CHRISTMAS DANCE SONG.

[This song is sung with what Uncle Remus would call the "knee racket;" that is to say, it is a "patting" song. If the reader will bear in mind that the rhythmical effect is based on time — or recurring and invariable pauses — there will be no difficulty in catching the swing.

Rabbit foot quick, Rabbit foot light,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
Hop, skip, jump! Oh, mon, he 's a sight!
Kaze he res' all de day en run all de night,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap,
Oh, Rabbit-tum-a-hash!

Crow fly eas', de crow fly wes',
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
Jay-bird hunt de sparrer nes',
En he eat all de aigs fer ter see w'ich de bes',

— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap,
Oh, Rabbit-tum-a-hash!

Little pot simmer, big pot bubble,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
Dumplin' flirt like he done got in trouble,
He flirt en he flip twel he look like he double,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap,
Oh, Rabbit-tum-a-hash!

Pot, he bigger dan de fryin' pan,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
En 'pun dis groun' I take my stan',
I druther be a nigger dan a po' w'ite man,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
Oh, Rabbit-tum-a-hash!

Nigger, he chunk up de fire en grin,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
Oh, do run yer, Miss Sooky Blueskin,
You ferget fer ter put dat seas'nin' in,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
Oh, Rabbit-tum-a-hash!

W'en Pa'tridge call — "Bob White, Bob White!"
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
"Does yo' dogs bite?" "Oh, yes, at night!"
Oh, den, Mister Rabbit lif' he foot mighty light,
— Tum-a-hash, tum-a-heap!
Oh, Rabbit-tum-a-hash!

V.

"DEM LAM'S A-CRYIN'!"

Ain't you year dem Lam's a-eryin'?
Cryin,' cryin', ery no mo'!
Lam's a-shoutin', Lam's a-eryin',
Cryin', eryin', on de udder sho'!

One fer Paul en one fer Silas,
En one fer ter make my heart rejoice!
Don't you year dem Lam's a-eryin'?
O dat Saviour blessid voice!

Don't you year dem Lam's a-eryin'?
Satan erawl en Satan ereep;
Lam's a-shoutin', Lam's a-eryin',
O Good Shepherd, feed my sheep!

He kin stop dem Lam's fum eryin',
He kin make dis heart rejoice;
No mo' eallin', no mo' eryin',
W'en my dear soul shill git hit's choice!

Jesus watch w'iles you been weepin';
Weepin', weepin', weep, soul, weep!
All his talkin' soun' like singin'—
O Good Shepherd, feed my sheep!

One fer Paul en one fer Silas,
En one fer ter make my heart rejoice!
Don't you year dem Lam's a-cryin'?
O dat Saviour blessid voice!

VI.

"RUN, NIGGER, RUN!"

Do, please, marster, don't ketch me,
Ketch dat nigger behime dat tree;
He stole money en I stole none,
Put him in de calaboose des for fun!
Oh, run, nigger, run! de patter-roller ketch you—
Run, nigger, run! Hit 's almos' day!

Some folks say dat nigger won't steal,
But I kotch one in my corn-fiel';
He run ter de eas', he run ter de wes',
He run he head in a hornet's nes'!
Oh, run, nigger, run! de patter-roller ketch you—
Run, nigger, run! Hit 's almos' day!

My ole Miss, she prommus me
Dat w'en she die, she set me free;
But she done dead dis many year ago,
En yer I 'm a-hoein' de same ole row!
Oh, run, nigger, run! de patter-roller ketch you—
Run, nigger, run! Hit 's almos' day!

I 'm a-hoein' across, I 'm a-hoein' aroun',
I 'm a-cleanin' up some mo' new groun',
Whar I lif' so hard, I lif' so free,
Dat my sins rises up in fronter me!
Oh, run, nigger, run! de patter-roller ketch you —
Run nigger, run! Hit 's almos' day!

But some er dese days my time will come,
I 'll year dat bugle, I 'll year dat drum,
I 'll see dem armies a-marchin' along,
I 'll lif' my head en jine der song —
I 'll hide no mo' behime dat tree,
W'en de angels flock fer ter wait on me!
Oh, run, nigger, run! de patter-roller ketch you —
Run, nigger, run! Hit 's almos' day!

VII.

CORN-SHUCKING SONG.

[A rail was placed in the middle of the cornpile, at the bottom. The shuckers were divided into two competing gangs, and there was a rivalry as to which side should reach the rail first. Hence the song.]

Hit 's a mighty dry year w'en de crab-grass fail,
Oh, row, row, row! who laid dat rail?
Hit 's a mighty dark night w'en de nigger tu'n pale,
De big-foot nigger dat laid dat rail!
Oh, row, row, row! who laid dat rail?
Rinktum, ranktum, laid dat rail!

Show me de nigger dat laid dat rail,
Oh, row, row, row! who laid dat rail?

W'en nigger git los', hit 's de same ole tale,
Oh, row, row, row! who laid dat rail?
Ten mile ter de church, one mile ter de jail,
Oh, show me de nigger dat laid dat rail!
Big-foot nigger dat laid dat rail!
Oh, row, row, row! who laid dat rail?
Rinktum, ranktum, laid dat rail!

W'en niggers fuss, de w'ite folks frail,
Oh, row, row, row! who laid dat rail?
We er gittin' dar now, don't tell no tale,
Show me de nigger dat laid dat rail!
I 'll stick he head in a big tin pail,
Oh, tu'n me aloose! lemme tetch dat rail!
Oh, row, row, row! who laid dat rail?
Big-foot nigger dat laid dat rail!
Oh, show me de nigger dat laid dat rail,
Rinktum, ranktum, laid dat rail!

VIII.

OH, JULY! DIS LONG TIME!

(PUTNAM COUNTY, GEORGIA. 1858.)

MR. COON, Mr. Coon, he rack mighty fas',
Mr. Coon, Mr. Coon, he slip froo de grass —
En yit Mr. Coon gits cotch at las'!

Oh, July! Dis long time!
Dis long time! Oh, July!
Oh, July! Dis strong time!
Dis strong time! Oh, July![1]

Mr. Rabbit, Mr. Rabbit, he run en squot,
He lif' he foot lak de groun' mighty hot —
En yit Mr. Rabbit lan's safe in de pot!
Oh, July! Dis strong time!
Dis strong time! Oh, July!
Oh, July! Mighty long time!
Mighty long time! Oh, July!

Mr. Fox, Mr. Fox, he git over groun',
He run cross-ways en he run all 'roun' —
En yit Mr. Fox will be run down!
Oh, July! Dis long time!
Dis long time! Oh, July!
Oh, July! Dis wrong time!
Dis wrong time! Oh, July!

Mr. Mink, Mr. Mink, he slicker dan sin,
He make 'im a hole en den he slip in —
En yit Mr. Mink will lose he skin!
Oh, July! Mighty wrong time!
Mighty wrong time! Oh, July!
Oh, July! Mighty long time!
Mighty long time! Oh, July!

[1] This refrain chorus belongs to a dozen different songs. Its meaning must be taken literally. July is a long time, a hot time, and a strong time to those who work in the sun.

IX.

WALK-A CHALK.

(In and around Sapelo, Georgia Coast.)

'E walk-a chalk, da honkry man,
'E eat um rice, 'e sop um pan;
'E sop um pan, 'e lick um dry,
'E smack 'e mout', 'e roll 'e y-eye:
Ki! Walk-a chalk!

Da honkry man, 'e walk-a chalk,
'E mout' so full 'e no kin talk,
'E shed 'e y-eye, 'e wuk um jaw,
'E no kin talk, 'e chaw um chaw:
Hi! Walk-a chalk!

'E wipe 'e mout', 'e shed 'e y-eye,
'E 'tretch um out, lak gwan fer die,
'E flup 'e head smack in da pan,
'E dream 'e yerry da buckra-man![1]
'E walk-a chalk!

X.

"COME ALONG, TRUE BELIEVER!"

Come along, true believer, come along:
De time is a rollin' 'roun',

[1] White man; boss; overseer.

W'en dem w'at stan's a-haltin' by de way
Won't w'ar no glory crown!
Oh, de sun shine white, de sun shine bright —
Year de news w'at de spirit tells:
De angels say dere 's nothin' fer to do
But ter ring dem charmin' bells!
Almos' home! almos' home!
We faints and falls by spells:
Angels say ain't nothin' fer to do
But ter ring dem charmin' bells!

Come along, true believer, come along!
De way is open wide:
No use for sinners to be stum'lin' 'roun'
A-huntin' for de hev'mly guide!
Oh, saints, slip thro'! Oh, sinners, come too!
En a-year w'at my Lord tells:
De angels say dere 's nothin' fer to do
But ter ring dem charmin' bells!
Almos' home! almos' home!
We faints and falls by spells:
Angels say ain't nothin' fer ter do
But ter ring dem charmin' bells!

Come along, true believer, come along,
En walk in de hev'mly way!
I rastle wid Jacob all night — all night —
I rastle wid Jacob all day!
My cross is heavy, and it 's O my Lord!
En I year w'at de spirit tells:

De angels say dere 's nothin' fer ter do
But ter ring dem charmin' bells!
Almos' home! almos' home!
We faints and falls by spells!
Angels say ain't nothin' fer to do
But ter ring dem charmin' bells!

XI.

A NEGRO LOVE SONG.

Track in de paff whar rabbit bin play'n',
(Hey, my Lily! go down de road!)
Han' me down my walkin'-cane,
(Hi, my Lily! go down de road!)
Hey, my Lily! de cow done lowed,
(Go down de road! — go down de road!)
Hit 's wet on de grass whar de jew bin po'd,
(Hi, my Lily! go down de road!)

Mighty long way froo de narrer lane,
(Hey, my Lily! go down de road!)
En killdee holler like he callin' up rain,
(Hi, my Lily! go down de road!)
Hey, my Lily! de chicken done crowed,
(Go down de road! — go down de road!)
Sun gone down en moon done showed,
(My Lily, my Lily! go down de road!)

Han' me down my walkin'-cane,
(Hey, my Lily! go down de road!)

Big owl holler: No use stay'n',
(Hi, my Lily! go down de road!)
Big nigger tote de little gal load,
(Go down de road! — go down de road!)
Kase too big a turn make nigger leg bowed,
(My Lily, my Lily! go down de road!)

Han' me down my walkin'-cane,
(Hey, my Lily! go down de road!)
De boys all sing, an' keep on say'n';
(Hi, my Lily! go down de road!)
Nigger will drink fum 'n'er nigger's go'd,
(Go down de road! — go down de road!)
En some folks git w'at dey ain't never growed,
(My Lily, my Lily! go down de road!)

One man lose w'at 'n'er man gain,
(Hey, my Lily! go down de road!)
You git yo' shawl en han' my cane,
(Hey, my Lily! go down de road!)

XII.

"DE OL' SHEEP SHARP."

Oh, de ole Sheep sharp w'en he shell dat corn,
(Come along! come along!)
He shell dat corn by de rattle er his horn,
(Oh, do come along!)
But he wan't so sharp when he sont it ter mill,
(Come along! come along!)

Kase he sont it ter mill by de Whipperwill,
(Oh, do come along!)

He sont it ter mill by de Whipperwill,
(Come along! come along!)
W'ich he drap de bag, en let it spill,
(Oh, do come along!)
En w'atter you reckon he did declar',
(Come along! come along!)
W'en de folks pass by, en fine 'im dar?
(Oh, do come along!)

De day done gone, en de night ain't long,
(Do come along!)
Oh, ladies all, I mus' sing my song,
(Do come along!)

Mr. 'Possum, he clam de 'simmon tree,
(Come along, come along!)
En he wink he eye, en grin at me,
(Oh, do come along!)
I up wid a rock, en let 'er fly,
(Come along! come along!)
Kerblip! I tuck 'im in de eye,
(Oh, do come along!)

De day done gone, en de night ain't long,
(Do come along!)
Oh, ladies all, I mus' sing my song,
(Do come along!)

Ole Marster say he never is see,
(Come along! come along!)
No 'possum half ez fat ez he,
(Oh, do come along!)
Dey flinged away de head en de feet,
(Come along! come along!)
En den had 'nuff fer all ter eat,
(Oh, do come along!)

De day done gone, en de night ain't long,
(Do come along!)
Oh, ladies all, I mus' sing my song,
(Do come along!)

Dey tuck 'im down ter Polly Bell,
(Come along! come along!)
Bekaze dey know she cook 'im well,
(Oh, do come along!)
She made a pie, en she made a stew,
(Come along! come along!)
A roas' en a fry, en a bobbycue,
(Oh, do come along!)

De day done gone, en de night ain't long,
(Do come along!)
Oh, ladies all, I mus' sing my song,
(Do come along!)

XIII.

RING DEM CHARMIN' BELLS.

Oh, sinner! don't take yo' time,
Dar 's a road we all mus' clime —
  Hit 's a road full er faintin' spells:
    De way mighty long,
    But soul get strong
  When she year dem charmin' bells.
    Oh, sing, my soul!
    Oh, ring en roll!
  Ring-a dem charmin' bells!

De road mighty full er dus',
But sinner kin quench his thus',
  By drinkin' fum de Jacob wells:
    En de soul git strong
    W'en she year dat song —
  Oh, ring dem charmin' bells!
    Oh, Jerdun roll!
    Oh, sing, my soul!
  Ring-a dem charmin' bells!

Oh, sufferin' sinner, rise —
Lif' up dem 'umbel eyes —
  Lissen w'at de Speret tells:
    Oh, do git strong
    En sing dat song —

I year dem charmin' bells.
Oh, sing, my soul!
Oh, ring en roll!
Ring-a dem charmin' bells!

W'en de night git dark en col',
En you year dat Jerdun roll,
Dat de place whar John befells;[1]
Oh, soul, git strong,
En sing dat song —
Oh, ring dem charmin' bells!
Oh, sing, my soul!
Oh, ring en roll!
Ring-a dem charmin' bells!

My Lord, he done onroll,
Dat shinin' clof uv gol',
En de heav'ms dey sinks en swells,
Oh, soul, sing strong!
Des shout dat song —
Oh, ring dem charmin' bells!
Oh, sing, my soul!
Oh, ring en roll!
Ring-a dem charmin' bells!

[1] In other words, this is what befell St. John. It may be well to state in this connection that this attempt to render the spirit of a very quaint song should not be confounded with "Roll, Jordan, Roll," the music of which has been preserved with wonderful success by the late Mrs. Lucy McKim Garrison, nor with another song with the same refrain. The rolling of the Jordan and the ringing of the charming bells are heard in a dozen negro songs.

XIV.

HOG-FEEDER'S SONG.

Oh, rise up, my ladies! Lissen unter me!
Gwoop! Gwoop![1] *Gee-whoop! Goo-whee!*
I 'm a-gwine dis night fer ter knock along er you!
Gwoop! Gwoop! Gee-whoop! Goo-whoo!
Pig-goo! Pig-gee! Gee-oo-whee!

Oh, de stars look bright, des like dey gwinter fall,
En way todes sundown you hear de Kildee call;
Stee-wee! Killdee! Pig-goo! Pig-gee!
Pig! Pig! Pig-goo! Pig! Pig! Pig-gee!

De blue barrer squeal kaze he can't squeeze thoo,
En he hump up his back des like niggers do!
Oh, humpty-umpty blue! *Pig-gee! Pig-goo!*
Pig! Pig! Pig-gee! Pig! Pig! Pig-goo!

Oh, rise up, my ladies! Lissen unter me!
Gwoop! Gwoo-pee! Gee-whoop! Goo-whee!
I 'm a-gwine dis night a-gallantin' out wid you!
Gwoop! Gwoo-pee! Gee-whoop! Goo-whoo!
Pig-goo! Pig-gee! Gee-oo-whee!

Ole sow got sense des ez sho ez you er born,
Kaze she take'n hunch de basket fer ter shatter out corn!

[1] G hard here and throughout.

Ma'm, you make too free! *Pig-goo! Pig-gee!*
Pig! Pig! Pig-goo! Pig! Pig! Pig-gee!

When de pig git fat, he better stay close,
Kaze fat pig nice fer ter hide out en roas'!
En he tas'e mighty good in de barbecue!
Oh, roas' pig, shoo! 'N-yum! dat barbecue!
Pig! Pig! Pig-gee! Pig! Pig! Pig-goo!

Oh, rise up, my ladies! Lissen unter me!
Gwoop! Gwoo-pee! Gee-whoop! Goo-whee!
I 'm a-gwine dis night fer ter knock aroun' wid you!
Gwoop! Goo-pee! Gee-whoop! Goo-whoo!
Pig-goo! Pig-gee! Gee-oo-whee!

XV.

NURSERY SONG.

MAMMY went away — she tol' me ter stay,
An' take good keer er de baby,
She tol' me ter stay an' sing dis away:
Oh, go ter sleepy, little baby!

Chorus.

Oh, go ter sleep! Sleepy, little babe,
Oh, go ter sleepy, little baby,
Kaze when you wake, you 'll git some cake,
An' ride a little white horsey!

Oh, de little Butterfly, he stole some pie —
Go ter sleepy, little baby!
An' he flew'd so high, twel he put out his eye —
Oh, go ter sleepy, little baby!

Chorus.

Oh, shet yo' eye, an don't you cry —
Go ter sleepy, little baby!
Kaze mammy 's boun' fer ter come bimeby —
Oh, go ter sleepy, little baby!

Chorus.

We 'll stop up de cracks and sow up de seams —
De Booger Man never shill ketch you!
Oh, go ter sleep and dream sweet dreams —
De Booger Man never shill ketch you!

Chorus.

You shill hear dem silver bells ring —
Bye-oh, sweet little baby!
You shill hear sweet angels sing —
Oh, go ter sleepy, little baby!

Chorus.

De river run wide, de river run deep —
Oh, bye-oh, sweet little baby!
De boat rock slow — shill rock you ter sleep —
Oh, bye-oh, sweet little baby!

Chorus.

XVI.

MY HONEY, MY LOVE.

Hit 's a mighty fur ways up de Far'well Lane,
My honey, my love!
You may ax Mister Crow, you may ax Mister Crane,
My honey, my love!
Dey 'll make you a bow, en dey 'll tell you de same,
My honey, my love!
Hit 's a mighty fur ways fer ter go in de night,
My honey, my love!
My honey, my love, my heart's delight —
My honey, my love!

Mister Mink, he creeps twel he wake up de snipe,
My honey, my love!
Mister Bull-Frog holler, Come alight my pipe!
My honey, my love!
En de Pa'tridge ax, Ain't yo' peas ripe?
My honey, my love!
Better not walk erlong dar much atter night,
My honey, my love!
My honey, my love, my heart's delight —
My honey, my love!

De Bully-Bat fly mighty close ter de groun',
My honey, my love!

Mister Fox, he coax 'er, Do come down!
My honey, my love!
Mister Coon, he rack all 'roun' en 'roun',
My honey, my love!
In de darkes' night, oh, de nigger, he 's a sight!
My honey, my love!
My honey, my love, my heart's delight —
My honey, my love!

Oh, flee, Miss Nancy, flee ter my knee,
My honey, my love!
'Lev'm big, fat coons liv' in one tree,
My honey, my love.
Oh, ladies all, won't you marry me?
My honey, my love!
Tu'n lef', tu'n right, we 'll dance all night,
My honey, my love!
My honey, my love, my heart's delight —
My honey, my love!

De big Owl holler en cry fer his mate,
My honey, my love!
Oh, don't stay long! Oh, don't stay late!
My honey, my love.
Hit ain't so mighty fur ter de Good-by Gate,
My honey, my love!
Whar we all got ter go w'en we sing out de night,
My honey, my love!
My honey, my love, my heart's delight —
My honey, my love!

HIS HOME FOLKS AND FRIENDS.

HIS HOME FOLKS AND FRIENDS.

I.

UNCLE REMUS AT THE TELEPHONE.

One night recently, as Uncle Remus's Miss Sally was sitting by the fire sewing and singing softly to herself, she heard the old man come into the back yard and enter the dining-room, where a bright fire was still burning in the grate. Everything had been cleared away. The cook had gone and the house girl had disappeared, and the little boy was asleep. Uncle Remus had many privileges in the house of the daughter of his old mistress and master, and one of these was to warm himself by the dining-room fire whenever he felt lonely, especially at night. To the lady there was a whimsical suggestion of pathos in everything the old negro said and did; and yet her attitude toward Uncle Remus was one of bustling

criticism and depreciation. By leaning back in her chair a little, she could see him as he sat before the fire enjoying the warmth.

"I should think it was time for you to be in bed," she exclaimed.

"No'm, 't ain't," responded Uncle Remus. "I year tell dat w'en ole folks git ter bed soon, dey feelin's bin hurted; en goodness knows dey ain't nobody hurted my feelin's dis day."

"Well, there is n't anything in there that you can pick up. I 've had everything put under lock and key."

"Yessum dey is sump'n n'er in yer, too, kaze yer Mars John supper settin' right down yer 'fo' de fier, en little mo' hit 'ud a bin dry spang up, if I had n't 'a' drapt in des w'en I did. I year Mars John tell dat ar nigger 'oman w'at you call yo' cook fer ter have 'im some fried aigs fur supper, en ef deze ain't fried en dried I ain't never see none w'at is. W'en Mars John come, you kin set plum' in dar en year 'im crack um up in his mouf, same lak cow chawin' fodder. Las' Sat'd'y night Mars John fotch some fried isters home, en ef dish yer nigger 'oman stay on dis hill many mo' days, he ull git all his vittles cooked down

THE "UNCLE REMUS" BRANCH OF THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY OF ATLANTA

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town en fetch it home in a baskit. What Mars John now?"

Just then there was a call at the telephone. The little gong rattled away like a house on fire. As the lady went to answer it, Uncle Remus rose from his chair and crept on his tip-toes to the door that opened into the sitting-room. He heard his Miss Sally talking.

"Well, what 's wanted? . . . Oh — is that you? Well, I could n't imagine . . . No . . . Fast asleep too long ago to talk about . . . Why of course! No! . . . Why should I be frightened! . . . I declare! you ought to be ashamed . . . Remus is here . . . Two hours? I think you are horrid mean! . . . By-by!"

Uncle Remus stood looking suspiciously at the telephone after his Miss Sally had turned away.

"Miss Sally," he said presently, "wuz you talkin' ter Mars John?"

"Certainly. Who did you suppose it was?"

"Wharbouts wuz Mars John?"

"At his office."

"Way down yan on Yallerbamer Street?"

"Yes."

At this piece of information, Uncle Remus emitted a groan that was full of doubt and

pity, and went into the dining-room. His Miss Sally laughed, and then an idea seemed to strike her. She called him back, and went again to the telephone.

"Is that you, Central! . . . Please connect eleven-forty with fourteen-sixty." There was a fluttering sound in the instrument, and then the lady said: "Yes, it 's me! . . . Here 's Remus. . . . Yes, but he wants to talk to you."

"Here, Remus, take this and put it to your ear. Here, simpleton! It won't hurt you."

Uncle Remus took the ear-piece and handled it as though it had been a loaded pistol. He tried to look in at both ends, and then he placed it to his ear, and grinned sheepishly. He heard a thin, sepulchral, but familiar voice calling out, "Hello, Remus!" and his sheepish grin gave place to an expression of uneasy astonishment.

"Hello, Remus! Hello-ello-ello-ello-o-o!"

"Is dat you, Mars John?"

"Of course it is, you bandy-legged old villain. I have no time to be standing here. What do you want?"

"How in de name er God you git in dar, Mars John?"

"In where?"

"In dish yer — in dish yer appleratus."

"Oh, you be fiddle-stick! What do you want?"

"Mars John, kin you see me — er is she all dark in dar?"

"Are you crazy? Where is your Miss Sally?"

"She in yer, hollun en laughin'. Mars John, how you gwine git out'n dar?"

"Dry up! Good-night!"

"Yer 't is, Miss Sally," said Uncle Remus, after listening a moment. "Dey 's a mighty zoonin' gwine on in dar, en I dunner whe'er Mars John tryin' ter scramble out, er whe'er he des tryin' fer ter make hisself comfertuble in dar."

"What did he say, Remus?"

"He up en 'low'd dat one un us wuz a vilyun, but dey was such a buzzin' gwine on in dar dat I could n't 'zactly ketch de rights un it."

Uncle Remus went back to his place by the dining-room fire, and after a while began to mutter and talk to himself.

"What 's the matter now?" his Miss Sally asked.

"I 'uz des a-sayin' dat I know Mars John mus' be suffun some'rs."

"Why?"

"Oh, I des knows it; kaze' ef he ain't, wa't make he talk so weak? He bleedz ter be in trouble. I'm a-tellin' you de Lord's trufe — dat w'ite man talk like he ain't bigger den one er deze yer little teenchy chany dolls. I boun' you," he continued, "ef I 'uz a w'ite 'oman en Mars John wuz my ole man, I'd snatch up my bonnet en I'd natally sail 'roun' dish yer town twel I fine out w'at de matter wid 'im. I would dat."

The old man's Miss Sally laughed until the tears came in her eyes, and then she said: —

"There 's a piece of pie on the sideboard. Do get it, and hush so much talking."

"Thanky, mistiss, thanky!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, shuffling across the room. He got the pie and returned to his chair. "Dish yer pie," he continued, holding it up between his eyes and the fire — "dish yer pie come in good time, kaze Mars John talk so weak en fur off it make me feel right empty. I speck he be well time he git home, en ef he 'uz ter git holt er dish yer pie, hit mought make 'im have bad dreams."

In a few moments the pie had disappeared, and when his Miss Sally looked at him a little later, he was fast asleep.

II.

UNCLE REMUS RECEIVES A VALENTINE.

UNCLE REMUS'S Miss Sally determined that the old man should not be slighted on Valentine's day, and so she hunted around and got a comic one that seemed to fit the case, and put in it a large envelope. Upon this she pasted a number of old postage stamps, and duly addressed it. When the day arrived, she had Uncle Remus called from his work in the garden. He came grumbling.

"When yuther folks 'roun' yer git ter eatin' der sallid en' truck, Mars John nee'nter come axin' me w'at gone wid our'n. Kaze gyarden truck ain't gwineter grow less'n hit 's planted, en she can't be planted less'n dey 's some un ter put 'er in de groun'. I ain't mo'n got my back fit ter de mattock twel yer dey come a-hollerin' en a-bawlin'. Hit 's Remus dis en Remus dat, en 'fo' de year out hit 'll be Remus kill de ole black cat."

"What has the cat done, now?" asked his

Miss Sally, who had heard only a part of the old man's growl.

"Nothin' 't all, Miss Sally; she ain't done nothin' 't all ter me," said Uncle Remus, in another tone altogether. "Is you want me, Miss Sally? Dat slick-head house gal squeal so w'en she holler dat I can't tell w'at she say."

"Yes; here is a big letter for you. I expect it is a valentine."

Uncle Remus adjusted his spectacles, took the letter, and examined it carefully on both sides, and then looked curiously at the superscription.

"How do she run, Miss Sally?" indicating the address with his forefinger.

The lady read: "Remus Misery, Esq., West End, Atlanta, Georgia: At Home."

"Ah-yi!" exclaimed the old man, his eyes twinkling humorously. "Dey des know'd I wuz one er de at-home niggers — dey did dat. Is dey got de 'squire on dar sho nuff, Miss Sally? Some folks calls Mars John kunnul, en some calls 'im major, en some calls 'im jedge; but dish yer 'squire business is bran new ter me. W'at 'uz de yuther name, Miss Sally?"

"Remus Misery."

"How de name er goodness does dey fine folks out dat away? De man w'at writ dat know me by heart. Let 'lone dat, I 'm ole mizerbul Miz'ry."

Still holding the letter, Uncle Remus felt of it carefully, pressing every part of it between his thumb and forefinger.

"What are you feeling of it for?" exclaimed his Miss Sally. "Why don't you open it?"

"I 'm too ole for dat, Miss Sally," said Uncle Remus. "Ef I feels any little bunch er sumpin' n'er in yer, den I 'll know some er deze yer yuther niggers bin fixin' up der cunjerments at me, en I 'll des take'n take it 'roun' yan en bury it whar Mars John p'inter made his bed las' night, en dat 'll ondo it."

"Well, undoubtedly, you are the craziest old loon in the country."

"Yessum. But you know'd dat nigger man w'at Ole Miss got fum Mars Bill Little endurin' er de war, kaze he could tan hides en make shoes? Well, dat ve'y nigger man ain't bin on our place mo 'n a week, 'fo' he fine a little bunch er sump'n layin' on de top do'-step. He pick 'er up, he did, en open 'er,

en dey wan't nothin' in dar but some ha'r, en some frog toes, en some dry roots. He take'n fling it down, he did, en go 'long 'bout his business, en dat night he 'uz tuck wid a misery in de side er de head, en hiz jaw got draw'd down, en look lak die he would spite er all dey kin say and do. Hit went on dis away twel bimeby ole Affikin Jack, he tuck'n come up fum de Albenny place, en time he lay eyes on de nigger, Brer Jack low he 'uz cunjud, en den hit come out dat de nigger done gone en foun' sump'n on de do'-step. Brer Jack ax 'im wharbouts is it, en de nigger 'low he dunno; en den Brer Jack 'low he boun' 't ain't so mighty fur, en lo en beholes! he tuck'n pull de cunjerments fum und' de nigger bed tick. Dat he did, kaze I seed 'im wid my own eyes. En den Brer Jack tuck'n bury it, he did, out whar de dogs make der bed, en he rub de nigger head wid a rabbit foot; en 't wan't two hours 'fo' dat nigger wuz wadin' 'roun' in de tan vats ten'in' ter he business. Dey ain't no hear-tell 'bout dis, Miss Sally, kaze I seed it wid my own eyes.

"I wish you please, ma'am, open it," continued Uncle Remus, "en read w'at de intents un it mought be, kaze I oughter be out yan

right now, puttin' dem sallid seed in de groun'."

"Miss Sally" opened the envelope, and drew forth a highly colored cartoon of a negro cramming a huge pie in his mouth. She read: —

> "He eats, he sleeps, he steals on the sly,
> Nigger, big nigger, with a mouthful of pie."

Uncle Remus took the caricature and examined it critically. Contrary to expectations, he did not make any demonstration of anger. He frowned heavily for a moment, and then sighed.

"Is dish year wa't folks calls a volyumtine, Miss Sally?" he asked presently.

"Of course it is."

"Well, den, I 'm done. I can't stay 'roun' yer. My time 's done up. I 'm a-bleedz ter go. I know dey ain't no nigger man w'at 'ud dast ter sen' me dis, en if it 's a nigger 'oman, den I ain't got no time ter tarry in de state er Georgy. You all bin treatin' me mighty well, you en Mars John, but w'en dey comes at me dis away, I bleedz ter go."

"Why? What is the matter?"

"No 'm; I ain't ezcusin' you all; I ain't excusin' nobody un it. Hit des happen so.

Yit I got ter move. I is dat. Fus' news you know, word 'll go 'roun' ter my ole 'oman dat I been kyarin on wid some yuther 'oman. She look lak she mighty feebly, my ole 'oman do, but dey ain't no mo' actier creetur dan w'at she is w'en she git 'er Affikin up. En den bime-by yer 'll come Brer John Henry, en he 'll gimme er invite fer ter draw out er de church. Oh, no 'm! Man w'at gits volyumtines, dat man ain't ter have no peace er min' less'n he git out er de country. I done got de 'speunce un it, mon."

It is unnecessary to remark that the old man is still digging around in his Miss Sally's garden and quarreling with the other negroes.

III.

"MISS SALLY" AND THE TREE MAN.

THE other day Uncle Remus had an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone — an opportunity which he promptly but quietly made the most of. Last year a consumptive-looking young man came into the front yard where the old negro was working, and after walking around and examining the shrubbery, suggested that appearances could be materially improved by the addition of a few trees and flowers. Uncle Remus resented the familiar way in which the young man went nosing about, and he resented the intimation that the yard was n't as nice looking as he and his Miss Sally could make it.

"Where is the lady of the house?" inquired the young man.

"Who? Miss Sally?" responded Uncle Remus, leaning confidently upon his rake. "She in dar, some'rs, I speck." The tone was not conciliatory.

"I guess I can sell her some ornamental trees and some nice flowers," said the young man.

"Goodness knows w'at she want wid um. Kaze she done got all de sorts and sizes w'at 'll grow roun' yer. I dunner wharbouts she gwineter put um."

But the young man rang the bell, and pretty soon he was engaged in showing the lady through a large portfolio containing pictures of flowers and trees. These pictures were not beautiful, but they were casually attractive. They were gaudy. The green of the trees looked as if it could be stirred with a stick, and the flowers were all in a state of inflammation alarming to behold. But the young man was a good talker. His fluency seemed to lend a sort of perspective to the glare of the pictures. His persuasiveness softened the harsh outlines and gave tone to the whole. Uncle Remus sang aggressively while this was going on, but no one paid any attention to him. The lady purchased twenty dollars' worth of trees, shrubs, and flowers, and the young man went on his way rejoicing.

In due time the order was filled, the plants set out, and the young man collected his

money, not without a protest from the lady's husband, in which Uncle Remus heartily joined. Most of the flowers withered, but several of the trees and shrubs grew and thrived. Some of them Uncle Remus recognized as soon as they put forth in the spring, and as soon as he had verified his recognition by careful comparison, he dropped his work, went to the horse lot, slipped under the buggy shelter, and laughed until he was exhausted.

But he held his peace. Lately, however, his Miss Sally has been teasing him so unmercifully that he has been compelled to make some counter-demonstration, and the other day it culminated in an undoubted victory for the old man. He begun it very cunningly. When he was sure his Miss Sally could hear him, he would talk rapidly to himself in a low tone, and then break into a fit of laughter that appeared to be uncontrollable. Then he would suddenly grow serious, sigh heavily, groan, shake his head, and proceed with his work in a forlorn, dejected sort of way. This went on day after day, until his Miss Sally began to have serious doubts of the old man's sanity.

"If you go on in this way, you will land in the lunatic asylum," she exclaimed one day, after Uncle Remus had gone through with one of his paroxysms of laughing and groaning. "Come! I want you to behave yourself; I don't want any crazy niggers around here."

Uncle Remus's only reply was a groan, and that was all the explanation or excuse he deigned to offer.

But the next day everything was made clear. The lady was in the flower-yard giving Uncle Remus some directions, when he suddenly dropped his hoe, and called out to some person going by, —

"Boss! — Oh, Boss! — I wish you step dis way a minit, ef you please, sir." It was the consumptive-looking nursery agent. He was evidently in a hurry, and hesitated about stopping. He pulled out his watch nervously.

"I declare, Uncle! I — er — I have n't hardly"—

"Dess a minit, Boss," said Uncle Remus in an insinuating tone. "Man come by yer terday en ax me whar you live, kaze he say he wanter git some er dem s'ubs w'at you bin sellin'."

Glancing at the lady, and seeing that she was paying no attention to him, the plausible young man seemed to recover his assurance. He drew out his note-book.

"What was the gentleman's name? I should be glad to supply him."

Uncle Remus took off his hat and scratched his head slowly.

"Lem — me — see. Look lak I oughtn' ter fergit dat man name off'n my mine. He come 'long yer day 'fo' yistiddy, and 'low, he did:

"'Dem mighty nice s'ubs en trees you got dar. Whar you git um?'

"Wid dat, I ups en sez, s' I, 'Dey 's a young gentermun w'at fetches um 'roun', en I 'll tell 'im 'bout you,' s' I.

"'Do so,' s'e, 'en ef he fotch you dat ar swamp poplar, en dat ar sycamo', en dat ar sweet-gum, en dat ar honey-suckle bush, I want some er de same kin'. Dey are mighty scase 'roun' yer,' s'e."

The lady, who had been pretending to arrange a rose-vine, turned around at this, but the enterprising agent was gone.

"Remus!" she exclaimed in a tragic voice, "call that man back."

Uncle Remus called him, but the man never

turned his head, and he soon disappeared around the corner. There was no tag on the sweet-gum tree, but that on the honeysuckle read "rhododendron," that on the sycamore, "American plane-tree," and that on the swamp-poplar, "American tulip tree."

Uncle Remus's Miss Sally went into the house, and at dinner time he learned that she had gone to bed with the sick headache. Just before night, "Miss Sally" felt well enough to get up, and when her husband came home he found her going about the house in a subdued, half reproachful way, with her head tied up. She had intended to say nothing of the swindle of which she was the victim, but after supper Uncle Remus engaged the cook in conversation, and after some palaver, his Mars John heard him exclaim, with well-feigned indignation: —

"Dat w'at makes I say w'at I does. When folks treats nice w'ite 'oman ez Miss Sally is dat away, den hit 's des 'bout time fer ter go 'roun' quirin' ef dey 's any law in deze Nuninety States."

His Miss Sally also heard him, and she became thoroughly indignant.

"If you don't clear out of that dining-room,

you miserable old wretch," she exclaimed, "I'll brain you with the coal-scuttle."

Whereupon she cried, and told her husband all about it, and this hard-hearted man laughed so immoderately that "Miss Sally" fluttered off to bed in a huff.

When the gentleman went to close the house for the night, he found Uncle Remus sitting contentedly by the dining-room fire.

"I speck Miss Sally mighty mad," said the old philosopher, when he was roused from his doze, "kaze she done forgit fer ter put out dem ar taters w'at she promise me. Dey er up dar in dat ar lef'-hand sidebo'd draw," he explained, "en de key, hit 's up dar on de top she'f. Don't git um all, Mars John, kaze Miss Sally 'll be a-lightin' on ter me."

IV.

INTIMIDATION OF A COLORED VOTER.

"I HOPE you all young gentermens is well," said Uncle Remus, as he entered the editorial rooms of "The Constitution," the other day. "I mighty po'ly myse'f, but dat ain't hender me from hopin' dat yuther folks is keepin' way from de doctor shops. Many is de po' creeter w'at done been ter doctor shops one time too much. Yit look at me. I bin dar mighty nigh much ez anybody, en Miss Sally say dey 's lots er hard work in me yit, 'vidin' anybody kin git it out'n me. In my young days I use ter year talk dat de nighest road ter de buryin'-groun' wuz 'roun' by de doctor shop, but 'spite er dat I keeps on taking der truck, en I ain't see dat it do me no harm. Ef any you young gentermens gits ter feelin' low down in de sperets, en sorter 'quare in de naborhoods er de gizzard, you des rack 'roun' to Mars Dock Alexander en git some er dem ar quiernine en blue mast

pills, en ef dey don't set you up, you kin des lay de blame onter me. When ole Miss was 'live, de doctor 'd come 'roun' 'bout dis time er year, en all de niggers, little en big, 'ud hatter come up en git a dost er jollup en callymel; but deze days you gotter hunt de doctor up en git a piece er paper en beat 'roun' town twel you kin fine some un fer ter mix up de truck."

Uncle Remus paused, and then broke into a loud laugh.

"W'at de name er goodness is I doin'? I des crope up yer fer ter ax you all young gentermens sump'n, en yer I is runnin' on like a cat-bird in a peach orchard. I dunner how you all is, but I ain't got no time fer ter be projickin'."

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed one of the young men, "do you hear that? He says he has n't got time! Won't somebody lead him out and ask him to call again and say one word — one little word — when he has got time?"

"En needer is I got time fer ter be runnin' on 'longer you all," Uncle Remus retorted indignantly. "You all kin take yo' shears an' split dem ar newspapers wide open, but ole

Remus can't take no shears en cut truck outer t'er folks gyardin, kaze ef I did dey'd slap de law on me. En ef I ain't got time ter stan' yer en talk, co'se I ain't got no time fer ter be gwine ter law. Dat gyardin out dar at Wes' Een' callin' me right now, en I ain't got a minnit ter spar' — dat I ain't."

"Suppose you go down in the fire-escape," some one suggested, but Uncle Remus ignored the hint.

"Man down dar on de street ax how I'gwine vote dis time, en I des runned up yer fer ter ax you all gentermens ef deyer a gwinter be n'er 'lection in de Nunited States er Georgy."

"Why, of course there is!"

"Now ain't dat too much!" exclaimed Uncle Remus with unmistakable bitterness. "Man go up en vote, en he ain't got time ter change his cloze 'fo' he gotter rack up en vote ag'in."

"Why, have n't you heard about Boynton, Bacon, and the rest?"

"I year Miss Sally readin' out names en dates, en 'sputin' 'longer Mars John, but I tuck de idee dey wuz one er deze yer cake-walks gwine on up dar."

"Up where?"

"Up dar whar de sleepin' kyars comes fum; some'rs up dar."

"He seems to be thoroughly familiar with the geography of our common country," remarked one of the young men.

Uncle Remus grinned broadly.

"I lay dey don't fool me on de cake-walk, kaze dey wuz a nigger man in one un um; but w'at pester me is deze yer 'lections follerin' atter one er n'er des lak a drove er sheep. Eve'y time dey comes, ole Remus gits in trouble wuss en wuss."

"Why so?"

"Des kaze. Mars John en Miss Sally gits ter 'sputin' 'bout w'ich de bes' man, en den dey comes atter me. Hit 's 'Remus, how you gwine ter vote?' en 'No, you ain't,' en 'Yes you is,' ontwel I des natally gits wo' out. Hit 's pull en haul, pull en haul, day in en day out, en I ain't got no peace er min' twel 'lection day done gone. Miss Sally say vote dish year way, Mars John say vote dat ar way, en w'en dat de case, w'at a ole nigger like me gwine do?"

"Well, how do you vote, after all?"

"Dat w'at I want to know: dat des zackly w'at I 'm atter. Mars John, he 'low he do

boss; yit I notices dat w'en Miss Sally say I ain't gwine to git no gravy on my grits, dey ain't no gravy dar, en de man w'at kin eat grits widout gravy is got mo' strenk in his stummuck dan w'at I is. Fum dis out twel atter de 'lection done good en gone, you kin des put it down dat de rheumatiz done struck me in de j'ints, en hit 'll be dat servigrous dat I can't move skacely. En eve'y time dey say vote, I 'm a-gwine ter grunt en groan like one er deze yer Wes' P'int ingines. But shoo! I ain't got time fer ter be runnin' on yer wid you all."

V.

A STORY OF A BLIND HORSE.

Uncle Remus walked into "The Constitution" office one morning recently after an absence of several days. He seemed to be rather fagged out, and yet there was a humorous twinkle in his eye.

"I 'speck you all gentermens done got de notion dat I'm a mighty kuse ole creetur," he said, chuckling sheepishly.

"He has been in more trouble," said one of the young men to another, in a confidential tone, but loud enough for Uncle Remus to hear. "If there's any trouble in Fulton County, the old wretch will shut his eyes and walk right into it."

"Trufe, too!" exclaimed Uncle Remus with unction; "dat's de Lord's trufe. Look lak I done got ter dem p'ints whar I oughter settle down en do lak t'er folks, but de mo' w'at I try ter settle down, de wuss trouble I draps inter. I done got so I feared ter tu'n

a corner, kase I mos' know ole Satan done got some kinder trap set fer me. It 's mighty kuse — mighty kuse."

"Well, what 's the difficulty now? You look as if you had just fought your way out of one of Satan's traps."

"I des got out er bed, bless you!" There was a hint of boastfulness in the old man's tone. "I bin layin' up same lak man in hospital, en I bin had mo' doctor truck dan de law 'lows; but spite er dat I got mo' so' places 'roun' munks my ribs dan a man w'at bin run over wid de kyars. I is, mon."

"Well, we might just as well suspend operations and let him tell us all about it," exclaimed the police reporter, flinging down his pencil in despair. "Nobody can pursue the literary calling in the building where that old reprobate does his talking."

"T'er day," said Uncle Remus, ignoring the police reporter, "Mars John holler me up en say he want some grass seed sowed in de peach orchard. He say he want de groun' broke up good, en den he want de seeds horrored in. I ax 'im wharbouts is I gwine ter git a hoss, en he up'n 'low I better go borrer one, en wi'les I 'm a borryin' de hoss I better borrer

de horror. I tuck'n traipse over dat neighborhood plum twel dinner-time, en I ain't git no hoss. Dis man say he done loant his'n out, en t'er man say he bleedz ter do some ploughin' hisse'f.

"Bimeby, I struck up wid Brer Plato, I did, en he say he kin make out fer ter loan me his hoss, ef I 'll take good care un 'im. Brer Plato hoss blin' ez a bat, en yet blin' hoss better dan no hoss. So I tuck 'im, en I put de gear on, en I kyar'd 'im home en broke up de groun', an blin' do' he wuz, dat ole hoss move right 'long. Atter I git de groun' ploughed en de seed sowed, lo en beholes, I done forgit de horror, en I tuck'n ax Miss Sally 'bout it, kaze Mars John done gone down town. Miss Sally, she up'n say dey want no horrors in her time, en she 'low I better git a bresh en drag it 'cross de groun', en do lak folks done w'en folks had some sense. Wid dat I goes, I does, en I cuts me down a good size tree, en drug 'er inter de back yard.

"Eve'ybody," continued Uncle Remus, "wuz tennin' ter der own business. Miss Sally, she uz dustin' 'roun' in de back po'ch whar dey wan't no dus', en Sis Tempy, she uz chunkin' up chips roun' de wash-pot en singin'

one er dem ar glory chunes. I stop de hoss at de back steps fer ter ax Miss Sally sump'n', en des 'bout dat time, dat ar nigger 'oman w'at mess up de w'ite folks vittles fer 'um start ter fling de dish-water out de winder, en de pan come wid it — *kerblimidy blam — blam!*"

"What then?" one of the young men asked, as Uncle Remus paused.

"Gentermens! you oughter des seed dat ole blin' hoss. He sorter squat, en den he lipped up in de a'r, en natally tuck wings. De fus' pass he make, he fling me plum thoo Miss Sally honeysuckle vine, en wrop me 'roun' de chanybe'y tree. Den he run over de wash-pot en knock Sis Tempy down, en drug dat big bresh 'crosst 'er. Let 'lone dat," continued Uncle Remus, speaking in a subdued, confidential tone; "let 'lone dat, he drug dat bresh 'crosst Sis Tempy de wrong way. Gentermens, don't talk! I year Sis Tempy groanin' 'bout some kinder stiffness in de j'ints, but de way she shuck dem shins in de a'r wuz scan'lous. Mc' speshually w'en de bilin' water fum de wash-pot run und' 'er. She des fetch one squall en riz fum dar, en made fer de house; en w'en she riz, look lak all 'er cloze bin cut bobtail."

"What became of the horse?"

"Shoo! dat hoss gallop off in de ploughed groun' en fall down, en time I git whar he is, he done had a nap. He des lay dar des ez ca'm ez a dead pig in de sunshine. W'at I lak ter know is dish yer: Ef dat ar hoss blin', how kin he see fer ter run 'crosst Sis Tempy? Now dat w'at I lak ter know.

"Sis Tempy done sent me wud," said Uncle Remus, looking serious, "dat I 'll be a lots older man dan w'at I is 'fo' I gits her fergivance; en I 'speck dat 's so, kaze deze yer oletime niggers is a heap mo' servigrous dan w'at dey wuz 'fo' de war. I 'm gwineter give Sis Tempy de big road. You yeard my horn!"

VI.

UNCLE REMUS IN LIMBO.

As the result of a very curious train of circumstances, Uncle Remus was brought up before Recorder Andy Calhoun the other day. He was triumphantly vindicated, but the circumstances that led to his arrest as well as his vindication may be of some interest to the reader. It seems that Uncle Remus's "Miss Sally," after counting the clothes brought in by the washerwoman recently, discovered that one of her husband's night-shirts was missing. It happened to be one which she had made herself, and she immediately called Uncle Remus up and told him to go after the missing garment, after describing it with great particularity. The old man was perfectly willing to go after the shirt, but two circumstances put him out of humor. The day was Friday. This fact was ominous enough of itself, but the omen was made portentous by the additional fact that Uncle Remus was compelled to

turn back, after he had gone a little way, to inquire whether a red or a blue silk vine ran around the collar of the shirt. This was irritating, and when the old man got fairly started, he was mad. When he reached the washerwoman's house she was out, and he was compelled to wait some little time for her return. When she did come, Uncle Remus was thoroughly worked up, and his anger was intensified a thousandfold by the loud impertinence of the woman, whose piercing treble voice was the delight of the religious congregation of which she was the leading spirit, and the terror of those against whom it was used as a weapon.

"Whar Mars John night-gown?" exclaimed Uncle Remus savagely, as the woman came up.

"Whose Mars John? I let you know here 's what ain't got no Mars John. Not dis week." She held her head high in the air, and her loud tone was irritating.

"Well, den, ef you ain't got no Mars John," said Uncle Remus, "you ain't got no bizness wid Mars John night-gown; en you des might ez well go in dar en git it out'n yo' chist, whar you got it hid away."

"You all hear what he sayin'?" said the

woman to two or three negroes who were lounging around.

"Git dat night-gown!" was Uncle Remus's imperative demand.

"Who ever hear talk er men folks w'arin' night-gowns?" the woman exclaimed contemptuously.

"Git dat night-gown, you triflin' huzzy, yelse I'll have you brung up."

"Who up? Have who brung up, you nasty, low life ole vilyun!"

All this and much more, until presently a policeman came along and arrested the woman on a charge of disorderly conduct. Perhaps he ought to have arrested Uncle Remus on the same charge, but the old man, with an eye to precisely such a contingency, made no great display of his voice. He was very mad, but he didn't yell as the woman did.

At any rate the policeman did n't arrest him, and the woman had no sooner reached the station-house than she preferred a charge of "probusness" (as she called it) against him, and an officer was sent after him.

Both the distinguished persons found friends to answer for their prompt appearance at Recorder Calhoun's court. The woman's

society brethren came to her aid in the matter, and Uncle Remus's Miss Sally sent this message over the telephone: —

"John, that miserable old reprobate has been arrested by a policeman. . . . No, I tell you I'm not joking. . . . I wish you would go down and get him out. . . . Ten dollars! . . . Well, what's the use of being a lawyer if you can't get him out without paying ten dollars? Well, it won't do for the old wretch to stay in that station-house all night this kind of weather. . . . Can't you go now? . . . Well, I wish you would. . . . Come home soon."

The next morning both parties were on hand when court opened. The friends of the woman had employed a young lawyer to defend her, and he, with an eye to humorous results, pushed the case against Uncle Remus. In the case against the woman, the testimony of the policeman who arrested her was sufficient, and a small fine was imposed upon her which was promptly paid, after which she and her friends remained in the court-room to enjoy the discomfiture of Uncle Remus.

The young lawyer rose and said that as the case against the old man was a serious one he

would beg the court to indulge him in a few opening remarks. He proposed to prove, he said, that the language employed by the prisoner (giving solemn emphasis to the word "prisoner") against his client was not only opprobrious, but libelous. The prisoner had in effect charged an honest woman with theft. The charge was not made openly, but by indirection; but in a case of this kind, what was indirection but insinuation? What was insinuation but slander? What was slander but libel? For his part, he was glad that the case was not to be tried before a jury, for the prisoner was old, and the verdict of a jury, which would be nothing less than a term of years in the penitentiary, might bear too heavily upon him. The young lawyer went on in this strain for three or four minutes, and finally announced that if the prisoner had no counsel he would proceed to call his first witness — the woman who had been so outrageously slandered. Before the witness could be called, however, Uncle Remus spoke up.

"Mars Andy Calhoun," he said, "you bin knowin' me a mighty long time, en I bin knowin' you; but ef dish yer de way de matter stan', den I 'm gwineter make admittance un it, 'fo' hit gits wuss. I aint gwineter say I

did n't exzuse dat 'oman er takin' Mars John night-gown, kaze I did; but yit, 'fo' I go ter de chain-gang, I wish you be so good ez ter sen' er p'leeceman out dar ter dat 'oman house en make 'im git dat night-gown, kaze Miss Sally done sot 'er heart on dat gyarment, en ef she don't git it back, I never is ter year de las' un it. I thank you might'ly ef you do dat, Mars Andy. De way de p'leeceman kin tell it is by er blue silk muscadine vine, w'ich de vine she run up'n down in front en 'roun' de collar, en all 'roun' de rizbuns."

It is perhaps needless to remark here that when the young lawyer proceeded to call his witness she was gone. She was gone, and she failed to return. The prospect of a domiciliary visit from a policeman was a little too much for her. The case against Uncle Remus was dismissed, and when the old man got home he found that the brilliantly embroidered night-shirt had been returned. His Miss Sally gave him a severe lecture, but his only response was: —

"You better lem me hang Mars John night-gown out in de sun, kaze a nigger 'oman w'at 'll steal dat kind er doin's ain't none too good fer ter have de small-pox hid some'rs 'roun'."

VII.

UNCLE REMUS THINKS HE FINDS A SNAKE.

During the past summer, the lady whom Uncle Remus calls "Miss Sally," and for whom he does odd jobs, went to one of the Virginia watering places. For some reason or other, her stay was prolonged until the latter part of September. When she returned, she found her backyard overgrown with grass and weeds, although she had particularly cautioned the old negro to keep it clean. She was very much surprised and somewhat indignant at the apparent neglect, and the next morning she made it convenient to be in and about the front porch as much as possible, in order to employ the first idle negro that came along and have the whole lot put in order.

Among the first to put in an appearance was Uncle Remus himself. He had a small garden hoe on his shoulder and a heavy cane in his hand. He stopped at the gate and looked up and down the street, and then came

slowly into the yard. The lady watched him as he came up the walk. His face, furrowed with the lines of age and laughter, was very grave, and there was a hitch in his gait which told of a struggle with rheumatism. The lady was watching him from a window, and, somehow, her indignation disappeared as she gazed at the weather-beaten features of the old man. She had known him since she was a little child, although her own youth had long since taken wings, and she was inclined to look kindly on all his failings. He was a family appendage, a piece of furniture that had become valuable as a relic.

Though the lady is a matron, with a plentiful sprinkling of gray in her hair, a spirit of mischief seized her. She went forth on the porch, and before Uncle Remus, with a happy smile on his face, could take off his hat and give her a genuine plantation greeting, she said:

"Howdy, old man. I have no work for you to-day." Then she turned and began to pull down the dead Madeira vines that were still clinging to the strings on which they had run so bravely in the summer.

"Lor', Miss Sally! you can't fool ole Remus," exclaimed the old man, laughing.

"Did you say you knew old Remus?" the lady asked quite seriously. "He was a great deal older than you are, and I expect he 's dead by this time. Until I saw the hoe in your hand I thought you were Remus himself. He always carried a bag instead of a hoe, and he never went in anybody's yard that he did n't come out with his bag full of victuals. When you get as old as Remus was, you 'll be better off by going to the poor-house."

The lady talked so seriously that the smile died away on the old man's face, and before he could say anything she had gone into the house humming a tune. Uncle Remus stood scratching his head and reflecting, and then he went slowly around the house, and took a seat on the edge of the passage-way that led from the kitchen to the back porch. The cook, who had been living on the place during the lady's absence, was busy cleaning up.

"Chlory," said Uncle Remus, "is you notice Miss Sally right close sence she come back?"

"I ain't got no time ter watch white folks," said the cook, who was fat and high tempered. "What I wanter be watchin' Miss Sally fer?"

"I des ax you," said Uncle Remus, with a sigh. He had heard the blinds of the dining-room window rattle, and he knew his Miss Sally was listening. "I des ax you," he repeated in a louder tone. "She wuz standin' out yander in de front er de house des now, en I axed her howdy, en she sorter roll her eye, she did, en 'low dat I wuz dead."

"Hush, man!" exclaimed the cook, coming to the kitchen door, and looking at Uncle Remus in astonishment.

"Dat 'zackly what she say," said the old man, with due solemnity. "'T ain't so much what she say," he went on, "ez de way she do. I bin knowin' Miss Sally ev'y sence she wuz a suckin' baby, and I ain't never is see her show de white er her eye like she done des now."

"I say it!" exclaimed the cook.

"Yassum," said Uncle Remus, with increased solemnity, "she stood dar, she did, en look like she dazed. I des bin runnin' over in my min' ef any er de fambly bin 'flicted dat away, en de nighest I kin come at it is dat Miss Sally gran'ma, she had a full blood br'er what married a 'oman dat showed de white er her eye, en dat 'oman she had ter be put in a straight jacket."

"Well! well! well!" exclaimed the cook. "You sho'ly don't tell me!"

Before Uncle Remus could make any reply, there was a swish of a dress on the back porch and a rattling of keys. Then a sharp, angry voice called out: —

"Remus, are you going to clean up that yard? If you are not, I want you to get off this lot!"

"Yassum, Miss Sally," exclaimed Uncle Remus, as he seized his hoe; "I des gittin' me a drink er water."

With that, the old man began his attack on the grass and weeds in the yard, and the lady sat at a window where she could watch him. She was not long in observing that he was in no special hurry. He would grub away for a few minutes, and then lean on the handle of his hoe and rest. Frequently, he would turn his hoe around, examine the blade of it, and shake his head. He seemed to get on with his work so slowly that the lady put on her sun-bonnet and went out to oversee the job. For an hour she kept the old man very busy, and he grew tired of it. She was not in the habit of following him up so closely. Finally, when he saw that she intended to see the yard

cleaned then and there, Uncle Remus raised his head and looked all around, sniffing the air.

"What is the matter now?" the lady asked.

Uncle Remus made no reply to the question, but continued sniffing the air, looking very serious. Presently he said in a very loud and emphatic tone: —

"I wonder wharbouts is dat snake what I bin interferin wid?"

"What are you talking about?" the lady asked contemptuously.

"'Bout dat ar snake what I smells. I kin allers smell um when dey gits stirred up."

"What snake?" asked the lady with something more than curiosity.

"Dat ar snake what I bin interferin' wid. He some'rs closte 'roun' here, sho."

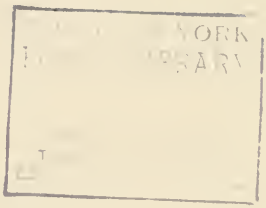
"Where?" asked the lady, instinctively grasping her skirts.

"Miss Sally," said Uncle Remus, in the most business-like way, "I wish you 'd please, ma'm, be so good ez ter look in dat bunch er grass dar. He smell so rank he bleedz ter be right 'roun' here."

Instead of searching in the bunch of grass,

"Miss Sally" jerked up her skirts, gave a little scream, and ran to the house like a deer. Safe on the back porch, she turned and looked at Uncle Remus. The old man was half bent, and his head was going from side to side. He pretended to be searching for the snake, but his Miss Sally knew that he was laughing at her. Angry as she was, she interfered with Uncle Remus no more, but left him to clean the yard in his own way and in his own time.

BRONZE TABLET
By Roger Noble Burnham


NORK
RARY

VIII.

UNCLE REMUS AND THE COMET.

"You all folks may be a havin' a mighty good time," said Uncle Remus, rubbing the back of his head against the door facing, "but I let you know dis ain't no wedder fer no picnics. I'm a-talkin' now; I'm a-flingin' de essent er de truf at you."

"Why, what has come over you?" said the society editor, pausing in the middle of an announcement relating to Miss Smithkins, of Smithkinsville.

"Well, I des tell you w'at," said Uncle Remus, "I bin mighty mizerbul, en I ain't no better now. Look like ter me hit gits wuss. Ef I stays at home, I feels lonesome; en ef I goes ter chu'ch, I gits stirred up; en ef I loafs 'roun' town, I years bad news. T'er night I say ter myse'f, I did, 'Remus, you ole rapscallion you, you better go down dar whar Brer John Henry preachin', dat w'at you better do. You better go down dar en year 'im sco' de

sinners. Wid dat, I tuck my foot in my han' en I put out, en w'en I git dar, de house uz full, en dey wuz all a settin' dar des ez ca'm, en des ez cole blooded ez mud-cats in de mont' er Jinerwary. W'en I walk in, dey all cas' der eyes on me, en dey keep on a-lookin' at me, twel bimeby I say ter myse'f, I did, "Bless yo' soul, childun, I'll des 'bout show you who I is, en whar I come fum, en I des rar'd my head back en I lit on ter dat ole time chune:

> 'Come along, true believer, come along,
> And walk in de he'v'nly way —
> I rastle wid Jacob all night, all night,
> I rastle wid Jacob all day!'

"You ain't year me sing, is you, Boss? Well, bless yo' soul, I shuck dem niggers up, en de fus' news you know I had um swayin' backards en forrerds, same like I had um on a string. I des natally hetted um up. Den I sorter ease down, and Brer John Henry, he riz en begin for ter preach. I lay back, I did, fer to 'joy myse'f, en I ain't mo'n doze off 'fo' he begin fer ter tetch on de comic."

"On the what?" the society editor asked.

"On de comic — dis yer stair w'at shows up 'fo' day wid 'er back hair down. I done got my 'spishuns er dat comic, and Brer John

Henry ain't no sooner totch on 'er, dan I picks up my hat, I did, en makes fer home. Brer John Henry done sont me wud dat he gwine fetch me up at confunce, kaze I vi'late de 'ciplin', but I done got too ole en settle fer to squat down en year deze yer preacher mens take der texes on de comic. Is you seen 'er yit, Boss?"

"No, not yet."

"She 's a sight, mon! She look lak she done drap loose fum some'rs en lef' a streak er fier behime 'er ez big ez er omlybus en long ez a freight train; en, honey, she 's des a cally-hootin'."

"It is more than probable," said the political editor, "that if we don't bother the comet, the comet won't bother us."

"Dey mought be mo' dan one proberbul," Uncle Remus replied, "but, chile, don't you fret; I ain't gwine nigh dat comic — dat I ain't. De furder off w'at she is de mo' better I feels. Ef no comic don't come a-huntin' atter me, I ain't gwine huntin' atter no comic — now you kin des mark dat down wid de p'int er yo' scissors.

"W'at pesters me," continued Uncle Remus in a troubled tone, "is de way Miss Sally

gwine on. Bless gracious! I can't git in sight er de house widout Miss Sally come a-hollerin': 'Remus! Oh, Remus! Man done fin' n'er comic. Yer de 'count right in de paper.' Ef I ain't forgit some, deyer mo'n 'lev'm un um right now in de Nunited States, en deyer all a-makin' fer Atlanta, Georgy. I ax Mars John 'bout it, en he hoot at me, but Miss Sally she say ef I don't b'leeve w'at she say, I kin des git up 'fo' day and look todes sunrise, en, bless gracious! dar wuz de comic right at me. De way I puts it down is dat Miss Sally got mo' sense dan me en Mars John bofe put tergedder.

"Hit look like," said Uncle Remus, after a little pause, "hit look like dey can't be no mo' 'leckshuns 'roun' in deze naborhoods 'cepin' dey's a comic hung up in de elements. I dunner w'at kinder sign dat is, but dar she is. Miss Sally, she talk politics at me eve'y time she gimme a plate er vittles, but I mos' fear'd fer ter go up dar en slip in my ballots. Eve'y time I year talk er 'leckshun, den I year talk er comics. Las' year, year 'fo' las', en now dish year. Up dey comes an' dar dey hangs. Some you kin see, en some you can't, but you kin year tell er all un um. Dey comes up en

dey looks at us en den dey goes a-sailin' off. Whar dey comes fum en whar dey goes ter, I be bless ef I know; but w'at do dey come fer eve'y time dey 's a 'leckshun up? Dat w'at I wanter know. Sho ez youer settin' dar, hit 's mighty quare dat a cullud man can't go en cas' his ballots widout dey 's a comic a-settin' up a-watchin' 'im. I ain't skeered," continued Uncle Remus, moving towards the door, "but I 'm gwine to keep one eye on Miss Sally an' te'r one on de comic, an' w'en Miss Sally starts in fer ter pack up, den I 'm gwineter go wid 'er, kaze w'en dey done fool all de yuther folks, de day ain't gwineter come w'en dey fool Miss Sally."

IX.

SOME ADVICE TO A COLORED BROTHER.

Uncle Remus had been in the court-house to see a gentleman, for whom he does little odds and ends of work. As he came out he saw, standing on the stone steps, a stylishly dressed negro man. He had on a shining beaver, a heavy watch-chain ran across his vest "like de sun, moon, an' stars tied togedder," as the old man described it afterwards, and a silver-headed cane was tucked under his arm. Altogether, he presented such an imposing appearance that Uncle Remus paused to take an inventory of him. The old man has fogy notions, especially in regard to colored people, and to some of the "new issue," as he calls them, he is known as "a white-folks' nigger," which, in the kitchen, is intended to be a term of very severe reproach.

Perceiving that Uncle Remus was eying him rather closely, the negro straightened himself up and gave a military salute.

Ignoring the salutation, Uncle Remus inquired, "What mought yo' name be?" His tone was bland and insinuating.

"My name, suh, is William Henry Haddem, de worl' 'roun'."

"William Henry Haddem?" said Uncle Remus, rubbing his head, and eying the negro curiously.

"Yes, suh, de worl' 'roun'."

"I'm mighty glad ter hear dat," said Uncle Remus, with the affectation of enthusiasm; "kaze some er deze here highfalutin' niggers is name William Henry on one side er town en John Jeems on t'er side. Yasser! right in dish yer town, let 'lone de 'roun' worl'."

"Well, suh," said William Henry, "wherever you go you 'll find dat I am name William Henry Haddem. Could you be so kind, suh, ez to tell me where de gran' jury is settin' at?"

"What you gwine do wid de gran' jury?" inquired Uncle Remus, with some show of solicitude.

"Dey want me," said William Henry. "Dey done summons me ter come before um."

"What dey want wid you?" Uncle Remus asked.

"Witness," said the other, drawing himself up. "I bin robbed right in de public street; dey jumped on me and took my money fum me right before my own eyes, and I 'm gwine up and tell de gran' jury all about it."

"When dey tuck en rob you," said Uncle Remus, "how much did dey git?"

"Sev'mty-five dollars," said William Henry.

"Wuz de money all yone?" asked Uncle Remus, showing no surprise.

"All exceptin' of sev'mty dollars," replied William Henry.

"Ah-yi!" exclaimed Uncle Remus. "En who is de sev'mty dollars belong ter?"

"It belong to de Jacob's Ladder Serciety," said William Henry.

"Dar now!" cried Uncle Remus.

"Yes, suh," said William Henry. "If it had been my money, I would n't worry about it, but I 'm de treasurer ov de Jacob's Ladder Serciety, and I feels in juty bound to make a riffle and try ter git de money back."

"Des so!" said the old man.

"Yes, suh," William Henry went on, growing more confidential. "I wuz walkin' along with my hands in my pockets, when two men jumped on me and got me down, and when I

got up frum dar I wuz perfectly nickleless. Yes, suh! perfectly nickleless."

"Den what de Jacob Lathers say?" inquired Uncle Remus.

"Dey ain't held no meetin' sence," said William Henry. "Ef de gran' jury will do dere juty, I 'll git de money back befo' de serciety meets."

"What you say yo' name mought be?" said Uncle Remus, shifting the weight of his body from one leg to the other.

"William Henry Haddem."

"Tooby sho'," said the old man, "Haddem had um, an now he ain't got um. Is you bin foolin' 'roun' deze here gran' juries en cotehouses much?"

"No, suh," said William Henry.

"So fur, so good," said Uncle Remus. "You see deze here steps, and dat dar door dar? Well, dey leads right straight to de chain-gang. I bin see niggers go in dar lookin' mighty nigh ez big en ez slick ez what you is, en when dey come out, dey mos' ingner'ly got somebody wid um fer to p'int out de way ter de rock-pile. Dem white folks waitin' fer you right now. Ef you go in dar, you ruffle up dat hat so she won't shine, and

hide dat ar watch-chain whar dey can't see it, en den when you git in dar you up en tell um dat you done fergit 'bout de circumstance er bein' robbed, en dat you speck you los' dat money som'ers in de big road. En den when you come out'n dar, ef you come out widout any han'cuffs on you, you des take yo' foot in yo' han' en go swap de watch-chain fer one er dem ar long railroad tickets what look like it got j'ints in it. You hear me talkin'!"

William Henry Haddem gazed at Uncle Remus in astonishment. He looked at his watch-chain, examined his hat, and seemed to be somewhat uneasy.

"What de Jacob's Ladder Serciety gwine ter do?" he asked.

"Gi' um back der money!" exclaimed Uncle Remus; "gi' um back der money! Don't you dast ter go in dar en tell dem ar white folks de tale you bin tellin' me!"

With that the old man went on his way. He looked back as he was turning a corner some distance away, and saw William Henry Haddem still standing where he had left him.

X.

PREACHING THAT IS PREACHING, AND UNCLE REMUS'S COMMENTS ON IT.

In a little town not far from Atlanta there has been a controversy going on between the Methodists and the Baptists. It has been a hot affair from beginning to end, and, as is usual in such cases, the bad feeling developed has spread for miles around among those who believe that a human creed is more important than religion itself; and this feeling has extended to the negroes, though the bitterness is somewhat mitigated by the good humor and the accommodating nature of the negro character.

An echo of this controversy was heard one Sunday morning recently, in the kitchen of the lady to whose family Uncle Remus used to belong.

It was participated in by the old man, Chloe, the cook, and Aunt Mimy, a colored lady who had once reigned in Chloe's place,

and who was secretly anxious to get back again. Uncle Remus was sitting near the stove, his elbows on his knees and his hands spread out to catch the warmth; Aunt Mimy was sitting in a corner bolt upright, stiff and uncompromising, while Chloe was bustling around preparing dinner.

"Sis Chlory," said Aunt Mimy, "is you gwine ter church dis evenin'?"

"Law, chile! don't ax me dat," replied Chloe with a sigh. "Time I git thoo wid dish yer dinner, I 'll be mighty willin' ter set down an' rest, I 'speck."

"Dat 's so," said Aunt Mimy, sympathetically. "I done bin dar myse'f. I know des 'zackly how 't is. When you cook fer white folks, you got ter be on yo' feet all day long, an' you may thank yo' stars ef you ain't on yo' head half de time."

"Dat cert'ny is de trufe," cried Chloe. "Dey ain't nothin' would suit me better dan ter go ter church dis evenin' an' hear um talk 'bout babtizin' an' sprinklin'. De white folks bin swappin' some rank talk 'bout which de bes', Methodis' er de Babtis', an' now I 'speck de colored folks gwine do some quoilin' 'bout it. An' I don't keer ef dey does, kaze Brer

John Henry 'low dat hit 's better ter quoil 'bout de docterin' er de sperrit dan ter git instignated wid de flesh. He say dem ve'y words, an' he 's a preacher, mon, ef dey ever wuz one. What church does you b'long ter, Sis Mimy?"

"Babtis'!" exclaimed Aunt Mimy, emphatically. "Brer Zeke Simmons, he 'low I 'm a fightin' Baptis' ef dey ever bin any. I done got de word; I knows what I 'm a-doin'."

"Ah-yi!" exclaimed Uncle Remus with affected enthusiasm, knowing that Chloe was a Methodist.

"Yes, Lord!" Aunt Mimy went on, closing her eyes in a self-satisfied way. "I bin a-stumblin' 'long a mighty long time. I bin a 'Piscopal Meth'dis', an' I bin a Affikin Meth'dis', an' I bin a Pottistant Meth'dis', an' I bin a Pesberteen. All dat time I wuz oneazy — all dat time I wuz restless in de min'. I laid 'wake nights an' I ain't had no appetite. I wuz dat worried dat I could n't set still. One night I wuz layin' in bed, an' it look like eve'ything cle'r'd up. I said out loud, 'I 'm gwine ter be a Babtis'.' I lay dar, I did, an' I felt des as ca'm ez ca'm could be. I say out loud, 'Is I right?' Sump'n answer back,

'Rise, sinner, yo' sins is done forgive!' I lay dar a little while, an' de same sump'n say, 'Go show de worl' what Jesus give you!' Mon, I riz fum dar a-shoutin', an' I bin a-feelin' like shoutin' ever sence."

Uncle Remus shook his head solemnly, but said nothing, and there was a pause.

"Well," said Chloe after awhile, "I tell you how I is — I 'm a born Meth'dis'. Dem what wants ter be babtize kin go git babtize, an' dem what wants ter be sprinkled can git sprinkled. I 'm a sprinkler myse'f; and I ain't los' no sleep on de 'count uv it, an' I ain't gwine ter lose none. I 'm des a plain Meth'dis'. Dem what got so many sins on um dat dey hatter git souzed under de water had better go splunge right in, an' dey oughtn' ter lose no time needer. Dat 's what."

Uncle Remus, seeing that a fuss was imminent, straightened up.

"You two niggers hush up! Miss Sally may be gone ter church, but Mars John ain't, en ef he hear you all gwine on dat way, he 'll jump out'n dat hall do' wid his night-gown on en tarrify you, mon."

"Wuz we talkin' loud?" asked Aunt Mimy.

"Des a-holl'in'," said Uncle Remus indignantly. "What you all want ter be quoilin' in white folks' kitchen fer? Go out yander in de ol' fiel', en pull ha'r en paw up de yeth, but don't come cuttin' up 'roun' here. What kinder 'ligion you call dat, whar dey scratch en bite en kick en squall? Ef dat de kind you got, all de water in de Atlanta Ocean won't save na'er one un you. I hear Mars John trompin' 'roun' in dar now."

"What we doin', man?" exclaimed Aunt Mimy, lowering her voice. "We ain't doin' nothin' but talkin' 'bout preachin'. Sis Chlory, ef you think yo' 'll go dis evenin', I 'll call back atter you."

"Oh, I speck I 'll go," said Chloe. "I 'll be wo' out, but Sunday ain't no Sunday wid me, less'n I goes some'rs whar dey 's preachin' an' gwine on. Ef we er gwine, less go whar dey 's sho' nuff preachin'."

"Dat 's what I say," Aunt Mimy assented. "Law, honey! We oughter go 'cross town an' hear Brer Dave Varner. Some er deze preachers des gits up in de pullypit dar an' stan's right still an' talks — look like dey ain't got no life in um. Dat ain't de way wid Brer Dave Varner. Gentermens! he des gits up

dar an' talks in about ez much wid his han's an' foots ez he do wid his mouf. I tell you de trufe, Brer Dave Varner dunno a blessed thing what he doin'. I done hear him sesso. He work his foots, he work his body, and he hol' his han's des so."

Aunt Mimy had left her chair and was standing out in the floor, in order to give Brother Dave Varner's favorite attitude. Her head was thrown back, there was an ecstatic smile on her face, and her hands were clasped together in the air. Uncle Remus looked at her curiously.

"Den," Aunt Mimy continued, "he work his arms an' swing his body dis away," — suiting the action to the word. "Man, sir! it make me feel right ticklish. Sis Hannah Simpson wuz settin' dar lis'nen at 'im one night, an' she lipt up in de a'r an' holler 'Glory!' an' fell back like she uz dead. Brer Dave, he seed 'er fall, but he ain't stop; he des keep right on, an' Sis Hannah she lay dar intranced, an' when she come back ter life she say she done bin ter glory whar she kin look back an' see de sev'mty an' sev'm creeturs wid fier-balls fer eyes a-grabbin' an' a-pullin' at de po' sinners. 'Ceppin' fer de dus' de mo'ners

kicked up, I ain't had no better time at no church."

Uncle Remus looked at Aunt Mimy again as she paused for want of breath.

"How you say dat Dave Varner do whiles he preachin'?" the old man asked. Aunt Mimy went through the performance again with characteristic vigor, clasping her hands over her head, swinging her arms, and swaying her body from side to side. It was an impressive pantomime.

"When he do dat away," said Uncle Remus, solemnly, "he a-practicin'. Dat 'zackly what he doin'."

"Practicin' what?" asked Chloe.

"Ain't you got no eyes, 'oman?" asked Uncle Remus scornfully. "Don't yo' sev'n senses tell you what he practicin' fer? When he reach up his han's an' jine um in de air, he 's a-reachin' fer one er deze lank-shank pullets like Miss Sally got here; en when he swing his arms en sway his body, he 's des a-gittin' 'way fum de hen-roos'." Uncle Remus carried his illustration so far that he, himself, went out of the kitchen, shaking his arms and swaying his body.

"Well!" exclaimed Aunt Mimy, with a

snort. "Ain't dat too much? An' Brer Dave Varner a preacher, too! I tell you, honey, dat ole Remus is a scan'lous villyun. Deze yer white folks done sp'ilt 'im."

"He sp'iles dem wuss'n dey sp'iles him," said Chloe, angrily, "a-gwine 'roun' here a-Mars'n an' a Miss'n uv um."

"I 'm gwine," said Aunt Mimy. "I ain't gwine ter stay whar he is. Come by, ef you kin, an' come soon. It 's a long ways 'cross town yander."

XI.

CALLED TO ACCOUNT BY THE PREACHER.

Uncle Remus's remarks about the Rev. David Varner, which have already been reported, went further, perhaps, then he intended they should go, though this is merely surmise, for the old man had acquired something of the independence and fearlessness of the family with which his lot had been cast in slavery times. At any rate, Aunt Mimy, thinking to prove to her preacher that she was his most zealous defender, took occasion to tell him at the first opportunity what Uncle Remus had said about him.

The Rev. David Varner listened with a frown, and although he said nothing in response, his very silence was threatening. In her enthusiasm, Aunt Mimy greatly exaggerated what Uncle Remus had really said, and such was her volubility that Chloe, who had accompanied her to church, found it impossible to enter a protest or to make an explanation.

Rev. David Varner took off his hat and smoothed his wrinkled brow with a large red silk handkerchief. He was tall and not unhandsome, being a dark mulatto. He wore a suit of shining black, and bore the appearance of a prosperous preacher who is satisfied with himself and his position. He seemed to be about forty-five.

"And he said dat, did he?" inquired Rev. David Varner, smacking his lips ominously. "He said dat I has been stealin' chickens? Well, ma'm, he may be relowed to talk about de rest of de colored people in dis communion, but he shall not be relowed to talk about me. I 'll show him, ma'm, dat dere is some colored people he cannot slanderize. I thank you hearty, ma'm, for bein' so good as to remind me of deze circumstances."

"I mos' sorry I tole 'im," said Aunt Mimy, watching the Rev. David Varner as he strutted off to join another group of his congregation. "I skeer'd he gwine ter beat ole Uncle Remus scan'lous."

"Law, honey, don't you fret," said Chloe; "ole man Remus bin in deze low groun's a mighty long time, an' dey ain't nobody bin beat 'im up yet. Bless yo' soul, chile! you dunno dat ole nigger man."

This happened on the afternoon of the Sunday on which Uncle Remus had criticised Aunt Mimy's reproduction of Rev. David Yarner's soul-stirring gestures. A few days afterwards, as the old man was lecturing a crowd of idle negroes who were standing on the street, near his Miss Sally's gate, the Rev. David chanced to pass along. His pompous strut and store clothes made him conspicuous. He paused in front of Uncle Remus, hung the handle of his walking cane on his left arm, stuck the thumb of his right hand in the armhole of his vest, and stared at the old man.

"And so you is de genulmun dat been excusin' me of stealin' chickens," he said nodding his head most vigorously, "I 'm truly sorry dat you has to go roun' an' slanderize your betters, an' so fur as I am concern, you will reternally regret it."

Uncle Remus's counternance was a study. With an indifference that was by no means assumed, he regarded the preacher through half-closed eyes, and there was a smile of mingled contempt and amusement on his face.

"Whose chickens wuz dey?" he inquired in a tone as bland as a spring morning, as soon as the preacher paused.

"Dey was not nobody's chickens," exclaimed Rev. David Varner, with increasing indignation, "an' I prepose to hold you ersponsible for de scandal."

"What yo' name?" asked Uncle Remus straightening himself up.

"Revun David Varner," exclaimed the other, "a preacher of de reternal gospel, an' a 'spectable man."

"Well, I dunner what else you mought be," said Uncle Remus, "but I know mighty well dat you ain't name David Varner."

"What is I name, den?" inquired the other in a somewhat subdued tone.

"You er name Mose Waters," said Uncle Remus. "I know'd yo' daddy in Jasper County, en I bin knowin' you off en on sence you had yo' eyes open. Ef you 'll sneak aroun' en pick up some un else's name, what is dey you won't pick up? Now, I des ax you dat right here befo' deze folks."

"Well, suh," said the Reverend Dave, totally unprepared for this turn of affairs, "in rega'd to de name, it is not what I 'm here to talk erbout."

"Well, let 's fling it in," said Uncle Remus, raising his voice to an irritating pitch. "A

man what kin talk ez what dey sez you kin, aint got no business slightin' his own name. Now, I want you ter tell me en deze yuther folks how come Mose Waters, de name dat you wuz borned inter, ain't des ez good ez Dave Varner. You got de whole sidewalk fer er flatform, en you kin des r'ar back en tell us all you know 'bout it."

"What I come fer," said the Rev. David, "is to hol' you ersponsible fer diz 'tempt to slanderize a minister of de reternal gospel what have been call to preach de word."

"Nigger!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, going a little closer to the preacher, "you done change yo' name, en I 'll change yo' complexion. I des dar' you ter squinch yo' eye-ball at me. Ef you des so much ez make a Z at me, dey 'll hatter call de Black Maria, kaze I sholy will kill you. Now, go on en hol' me 'sponsible."

Rev. David Varner, seeing that Uncle Remus was in earnest, remarked that he would not be so undignified as to engage in a street scuffle, and went strutting down the street, leaving Uncle Remus singing, —

> "'T is de ol' Black Maria backin' up ter yo' do', —
> Hello, Black Maria, hello!"

XII.

UNCLE REMUS'S EXPERIENCE WITH "HA'NTS."

ONE morning Uncle Remus sat in his Miss Sally's kitchen with his chair tilted back and his head leaning against the wall. His attitude was reflective, though there was a twinkle of humor in his eyes as he watched Chloe, the cook, preparing to make waffles for breakfast.

"I hear tell," he said after awhile, "dat 'tain't no use fer ter have no cook in dis house."

"How come dat?" inquired Chloe with some interest.

"Ah Lord, chile!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, shaking his head, "you mos' too much fer me when you ax me dat. You know what de preacher say: 'So is desso; how come so is mo' so.'"

"I ain't hear no preacher say dat yit," said Chloe, complacently. "Ef dey ever is say it, dey done say it long 'fo' my time."

"I hear talk," said Uncle Remus, closing

his eyes and elevating his eyebrows, "dat all you got ter do is ter git you some flour en lay it dar in de pantry en walk out back'ards, en de nex' mornin', dar you 'll fin' yo' light bread done riz up en baked."

"It don't do dat away fer me," remarked Chloe, "ef it did, I boun' you I 'd feel mighty thankful."

"Dey tells me," the old man continued, "dat 'fo' me an' Miss Sally come here, de whole place was ha'nted."

"Oh, hush, man!" exclaimed Chloe, "who tell you dat?"

"Dem what know," said Uncle Remus, solemnly. "But, bless yo' soul, honey, dey ain't had no needs fer ter tell me, kaze time I sot my foot on de place I seed de signs. I seed paths runnin' thoo de grass en no tracks in um, en de red spiders wuz a-spinnin' der wheels on de front porch. Dar dey wuz. 'Roun' on de side er de house 't wan't no better, en right out dar on de back steps de snails had done writ der name on de planks. I know'd right den dat ha'nts had been projikin' 'roun' dar in dem neighborhoods."

"What you do den?" inquired Chloe, as Uncle Remus paused.

"S'posin' dat had er been you?" the old man asked in an argumentative way.

"Man — suh!" exclaimed Chloe, flourishing a dish-rag wildly above her head, "ef dat had been me, I 'd 'a' des riz an flew — dat I would! Ef you don't want ter see human folks fly, don't you put me whar dey 's any ha'nts. Now, I des tell you dat!"

"Well," said Uncle Remus, "I stood dar, I did, en scratch my head. I know'd in reason dat dem kinder doin's can't be put up wid. Den it tuck'n come in my head dat de signs what I seed wan't sho' nuff ha'nt signs. Dar dey wuz plain ez day, but I 'low ter myse'f dat maybe I done git so ole en fibble-minded dat I can't tell ha'nt sign like I use-ter. So, den, what I gwine do? I gwine see fer myse'f; I gwine come dar atter dark en see what kinder capers dey cut up 'twix' sun-down en moonrise."

"Oh, go 'way, man!" exclaimed Chloe, with unfeigned astonishment.

"Yessum," said Uncle Remus, "dat 'zackly de way de idee struck me, en she struck me hard, mon. I put out fer home, en got what little scraps er vittles de ole 'oman done save up fer me. Some er deze I made way wid

den en dar, en de yuthers I tuck en wrop up in a little piece er paper en put it in my pocket. Den atter it got dark good, I got down my hat en my cane, en come back fer ter see how de lan' lay."

"Well, I tell you now," said Chloe, "ef dat had er been me, I boun' you I'd er been gwine t'other way."

"I come back, I did," the old man continued, "en sot out dar on de front steps. De grass wuz growin' rank in de yard, de front gate wuz off de hinges, en de winder blin's rattled eve'y time de win' drawed a breff. High ez de grass wuz, dey wan't no crickets a-skreakin' in it, en dey want none er deze yer big night bugs a-zoonin' 'roun'. I sot dar, I did, en 'low ter myse'f dat I dunner how come Mars John en Miss Sally want ter buy dish yer place whar yuther folks 'fuse ter live."

"Dat's de Lord's trufe!" exclaimed Chloe, with unction. Uncle Remus took no notice of the interruption.

"How long I sot dar I ain't gwine ter tell you — it mought er been one hour, and it mought er been two; I mought er drapped off in a doze, en I mought er stayed 'wake; yit, long er short, sleep er wake, de fust news I

know I hear sump'n trottin' 'long on de piazzer — *dip-dip — dip-dip.* I look 'roun', I did, en dough it wuz dark en my eyes weak, I seed a great big black dog comin' to'rds me. Des 'bout dat time it seem like de dog seed me, en he stop en look at me. 'Fo' I kin shoo at 'im wid my cane, he fetched a growl en run right at me. I shot my eyes and hit at 'im, but dey want no dog dar. Dey wuz a sorter cracklin' soun' like dry weeds a-burnin' when he lipped over my head."

"Ah-ha!" exclaimed Chloe; "what he do den?"

"Dat what been pesterin' me," said Uncle Remus solemnly. "He lipped up in de a'r, but he ain't never lit on de groun'. Hit des like I tell you," the old man went on, seeing that Chloe was speechless with astonishment. "De creetur lipped up in de a'r, but he ain't never lit on de groun'."

"Wan't you skeer'd mighty nigh ter death?" exclaimed Chloe, dropping suddenly in a chair.

"Dey ain't gimme no time fer ter git skeer'd," said Uncle Remus. "Mos' 'fo' I fine dat de big dog done make his disappearance, I hear sump'n come 'long de piazzer — *dip-dip — dip-dip — dip-dip.* I look

'roun', en dar wuz a little black dog 'lopin' 'long, en time I could shut my eye, he riz en made his disappearance wid dat same cracklin' soun' like weeds a-burnin."

"Why n't you break an' run?" cried Chloe, with some show of indignation.

"Shoo!" said Uncle Remus. "Runnin' fum ha'nts is like dodgin' a thunder-clap. Yit I ain't a-denyin' but what I got up fum dar en done my level bes' fer ter foller on atter de dogs. Dey mought er made der disappearance mo' quicker dan what I done, kaze dey went away like blowin' out a light, but I lay dey want no mo' willin' dan what ole Remus wuz. I des tuck de nighest cut right 'cross de front yard. I 'speck dey wuz a fence in de way, kaze when I went back dar nex' day, de palin's wuz strowed all 'long de street, en folks wuz stan'in' 'roun' axin' one an'er ef dey hear dat drove er hosses runnin' away endurin' er de night."

"Ah-yi!" exclaimed Chloe.

"Dat what dey say," Uncle Remus continued. "I went back in dar, I did, en look all 'roun', en dey ain't no dog track in de yard. Needer wuz dey any yuther sign, 'ceppin whar I struck de groun' one time 'twix' de front steps en de fence."

"What you do den?" asked Chloe.

"I went right straight back en tell Miss Sally 'bout dat ar place bein' ha'nted. Miss Sally look so quare she got me flustrated. I bin knowin' 'er sence she wuz little bit er baby, all what she b'lieve en what she don't b'lieve, yit she sot in de hall dar en stood me down dat dey wan't no ha'nts. Bimeby I hear Mars John stirrin' 'roun' in his room, en den I know how come Miss Sally gwine on dat away. Mars John, he come out en ax me what is it, en den he natally gimme Down-de-country. A little mo' en he 'd a-cussed. But atter he done gone, Miss Sally come out en call me, en ax me how I gwine ter run de ha'nts off. I 'low dat ef dey ain't no ha'nts, 't ain't no use ter run um off. Den she 'low dat I nee'n't ter be a gump des kaze I knows how, en wid dat I tol' 'er dat de way ter git rid er ha'nts wuz ter git some prickly-pear root en bile it in stump-water en sprinkle it 'roun' de yard."

"What Miss Sally say?" asked Chloe.

"She say, 'Don't you min' yo' Mars John. You go on en run de ha'nts away. Don't stan' grinnin' 'roun' here.'"

"An' you went?" said Chloe.

"I went," said Uncle Remus. "I went, but I 'speck I 'll hatter go ag'in. De ha'nts done come back."

"Oh, go 'way, man," exclaimed Chloe. "How you know?"

"Well 'm, I 'll tell you," said the old man more solemnly than ever. "I wuz in here las' night atter you done gone, en I found a basket er vittles hid in de wood-box right dar, en I knowed in reason de ha'nts done come back, kaze dey ain't nobody 'roun' here gwinter hide good vittles like dat."

"Honey," said Chloe under her breath, "did you tell Miss Sally?"

"What I gwine tell Miss Sally fer? I tuck de basket home, en me en de ole 'oman en William Henry walloped de vittles up."

"Well, I thank de good Lord for dat!" exclaimed Chloe with a sigh of relief, and just then Miss Sally came into the kitchen with a swish and a flutter to ask why breakfast was so late. Chloe will never know whether the lady heard what was said about the basket of victuals, but Uncle Remus knows.

XIII.

A QUEER EXPERIENCE WITH THE PHONOGRAPH.

Not long ago the husband of the lady whom Uncle Remus calls "Miss Sally" carried home a phonograph, or graphophone, for the edification and amusement of his family. There were several cylinders with the machine: one or two comic solos, some pieces by a military band, a banjo solo, the chimes of Trinity Church, and some blank cylinders for experiment. When they had all enjoyed the performance of this wonderful invention, and had been duly amazed at the vivid reproduction of the slightest shades of sound, the lady of the house thought of Uncle Remus, who was engaged in repairing the grape arbor in the garden. She placed one of the unused cylinders in the little machine, set it in motion, and proceeded to talk into the receiver, imitating the voice of the cook. The result was a dialogue between herself and the cook, in which

Uncle Remus was the subject of discussion. In a little while the old man made his appearance at the door. He had dropped his hat on the back steps, and as he stood bareheaded in the attitude of expectancy, with a half humorous expression on his weather-beaten features, he cut a figure that was not without its pathetic suggestions.

"Is you sen' for me, Miss Sally?" he inquired.

"Yes," said the lady. "I've got a little machine I want to show you. Come over here. Now stand there and put these cups over your ears."

"Miss Sally, what kinder contraption dish yer?" the old man asked, examining the ear tubes suspiciously. "Please, ma'm, don't play no pranks on me. I been feelin' skittish all day, en ef you git me skeer'd I 'm bleedz ter holler."

"Don't be so stupid," exclaimed the lady; "put the things over your ears."

"Miss Sally, what you gwine ter do? My work waitin' fer me right now, en it got ter be done dis blessed day — ain't it, Mars John?"

The gentleman appealed to pretended to be

playing with the children, and made no response.

"I believe you are losing your mind," said the lady. "Put those things over your ears."

"Miss Sally," protested Uncle Remus, "I ain't got no time fer ter be projickin' in here. I been knowin' you ever sense you 'uz born, an I know right pine-blank you 'er fixin' fer ter git me in trouble. Deze yer fixin's is holler, en I dunner what dey got in um."

"Are you going to put them on?" inquired the lady impatiently.

"Miss Sally, fer de Lord sake lemme go out yonder en do my work. I ain't use to no kinder harness like dis, mo' speshually puttin' blinds on my years. I 'll put um on," he continued, seeing that protest was useless, "but atter you git me hitched up, I 'm sholy gwine ter break sump'n, en 't won't be my fault nudder. I tell you dat now."

Uncle Remus adjusted the tubes to his ears, and his Miss Sally started the machine. First came the announcement of the piece in a voice that sounded like it had been dug out of a tin mine and hardened by the Bessemer process. It was so startlingly near, that Uncle Remus, whose politeness is a part of his nature, dodged

his head, and exclaimed "Suh!" rolling his eyes at his Miss Sally.

Then the band struck up, and the old man seemed to enjoy it immensely. He shut his eyes, and then suddenly opened them, as if to make sure that he was still in the neighborhood. Presently the band concluded with the usual crash, and Uncle Remus drew a long breath of relief, as his Miss Sally stopped the phonograph.

"What did you hear?" she asked, as the old man took the tubes from his ears and proceeded to examine them more closely than before. He looked at them inside and out, and then fitted them to his ears again, but he heard nothing.

"Miss Sally," he exclaimed, "I wish you 'd please 'm tell me wharbouts deze yer pipes leads ter?"

"Right to the phonograph, here."

"De which, 'm?"

"The phonograph — this little machine here."

"Uh-uh, Miss Sally! Dey may fool you, but I done been yer too long fer dat; dey can't fool me. De t'er een' er deze yer pipes ain't so mighty fer fum de circus. I dunner whar-

bouts de circus is, but wharsomever de show 's a-gwine on, right dar is de t'er een' er dem ar pipes. You ax Mars John dar, en ef he ain't playin' no prank on you, 'long er dish yer contraption, he 'll tell you de same. When I go home ter night, I gwine ter holler at my ole 'oman: 'You Kather'n! wake up fum dar whar you settin' noddin' by de chimbly jam! Wake up from dar! You say yo' Miss Sally de smartest white 'oman in de Nunited State er Georgy, en yit yer she is done bin fooled by dem town folks.' Dat des 'zackly what I 'm gwine ter tell 'er, en I boun' you Mars John 'll b'ar me out in it — won't you Mars John?"

Uncle Remus rattled this off so rapidly that the lady had no opportunity to interrupt him. At last she said, with some show of vexation:

"If your head was n't so thick, you 'd see that the music is on this cylinder."

"Wharbouts, Miss Sally?"

"On this cylinder. The cylinder is covered with wax, and the music is on the wax."

Uncle Remus put on his spectacles, examined the cylinder closely, and then looked at his Miss Sally curiously. He shook his head slowly and said: —

"Miss Sally, I bin knowin' you sense you wuz a little bit er baby, en I ain't never hear you gwine on dis away befo'. I wish you 'd please 'm tell me how dat ar brass ban' gwine git in dar. De ban' what I hear in deze yer pipes had de big horn en de bass drum in it yit, let 'lone all de yuther horns, en my min' pi'ntedly tells me dat ef dey wuz all ter git in dat ar shebang dar, dey 'd bust it wide open. Now you know dat yo'se'f, Miss Sally."

The lady wanted to laugh, but, instead, she adjusted another cylinder, and told the old man to place the tubes to his ears. It was the banjo solo — the old make-believe affair with the mould of age on its whiskers. When it was concluded, Uncle Remus exclaimed : —

"What I tell you, Miss Sally? I know'd dey wuz a show gwine on some'rs 'roun' yer. Dar wuz de man pickin' de banjo, en doin' like he hear folks say de niggers does. I kin shet my eyes en see 'im right now. He got blackin' on his face, en his eyes is mo' bloodshotten dan what niggers' eyes is. He got on a high stove-pipe hat, en he showin' de bottom er his shoe wid chalk marks on it. He ain't no mo' like a nigger dan a bumble-bee is like

a roan mule. Yit dar he sets en plunks on de banjer. Mars John," the old man went on, "you reckon Miss Sally gwine ter up'n 'low dat dat ar man wid de banjer is in de beeswax?"

For answer, "Mars John" winked his eye and shook his head with an air of mystery. Meanwhile, "Miss Sally" was adjusting the chimes of Trinity. Uncle Remus, listening, winked his eyes at every stroke of the bells, and remarked when the ringing ceased: —

"Is anybody ever hear de beat er dat? Ef dey ain't a big fire broke out some'rs, de meetin' houses is all got in er bunch. Dat ar beeswax got a mighty tough job ef it got ter hol' all dem bells."

Then came the conversation between Uncle Remus and the cook, which had been spoken into the phonograph by "Miss Sally." The old man's placid countenance gathered severity as the dialogue was poured into his ears. The lady's imitation of the cook was cleverer than she had intended, and when Uncle Remus hung the tubes across the machine there was an ominous frown on his brow.

"Where are you going?" asked his Miss Sally, as the old man started out.

"I 'm gwine out dar en see dat nigger 'oman. Dat ar contraption is wuss dan runnin' de kyards. Hit beats eavedrappin'. Hit tell you what folks bin sayin' atter dey done said it en gone. Dat nigger 'oman out dar in de kitchen bin talkin' 'bout me scan'lous."

With that Uncle Remus went out into the back yard, and those in the house heard a conversation something like this: —

"I ain't been talkin' 'bout you needer. She tell you dat? She 'uz des prankin' wid you."

"Miss Sally ain't tell me nothin' 't all. I hear de ve'y words wid my own years."

"Lookyer, nigger man! is you gwine crazy? Ef you is, I want you ter g'way f'm here!"

"You up'n tell Miss Sally dat I bin stealin' tater pie, en fried sossidge, en light bread."

"Is she tell you dat?"

"Miss Sally ain't tell me nothin'. I tuck'n hear de ve'y words. What you done wid dat apern full er biscuits you tuck'n slipped off wid las' night? En whar dat can er devilish ham, en dat ar bag er prunes, en dem ar spar-ribs what you kyard off day 'fo' yistiddy?"

"I ain't deff! What you want to be holler'n so loud fer? She don't wanter hear you

gwine on dat away. All de white folks wants is ter git de niggers ter quoilin' an' fightin' an' see um go ter de chain-gang. You hush up an' go on 'bout yo' business."

A little later, when Miss Sally was attending to affairs in the dining-room, the cook took occasion to remark :—

"Miss Sally, you better make dat ole nigger man keep his mouf off'n me. I 'm gwine cripple him, mon, ef he don't lemme 'lone. Is you hear what he tell me dis evenin' ?"

"What was it ?" asked the lady, feigning ignorance.

"He come out here, he did," said the cook, scornfully, "an' say dat I wuz settin' my cap fer him, kaze you-all had 'im in de settin'-room dar showin' 'im de picters. He de sassiest ole nigger I ever is see."

XIV.

A CASE OF THE GRIPPE.

"You ain't been missin' me fum 'roun' here nowhars, is you, Miss Sally?" Uncle Remus asked one morning recently. He had been ill several weeks, and had just made his appearance, looking considerably under the weather, as the phrase goes.

"I noticed," said the lady, "that we had been saving a good deal of victuals lately, and Chloe has had a chance to get around the stove. There has been plenty of room in the kitchen. Where have you been?"

"Bless yo' soul, honey! I been laid up — I been laid up sho' nuff dis time. De time has been when I put on en played 'possum, but dat time done gone. I been had de measles, en de plooisy, en de swamp fever, en de rheumatiz, en de rash, but I never is had nothin' 't all like dish yer sickness what laid holt un me dis time."

"Have you been sick?" the lady asked.

"Now, Miss Sally," exclaimed Uncle Remus, "you know I been sick. Who sent me dat ar bottle er dram, en dat ar tum'ler er jelly, en who tol' dat ar doctor fer ter fetch me dat ar truck what I kin tas'e yit?"

"What did the doctor say was the matter with you?" asked the lady.

"He say it wuz some kinder brown sump'n n'er."

"Bronchitis?"

"Yassum; dat what he say. I tol' 'im right den en dar dat he kin take dat name en gin it a twist er two en kill lots er white folks, let 'lone niggers. He call de sickness dat, but ole Miss Sessions, which she live not fur fum me, she 'low it wuz de grip, en I 'speck it wuz, kaze it had a mighty powerful grip on me.

"Wellum, eve'y time I tuck a dose er doctor truck, I 'd up en take a dram; en hit wuz nip en tuck 'twixt de truck en de dram ez ter which wuz gwine ter kill en which wuz gwine ter kyo. But de dram got de best er de doctor truck, en so here I is."

"Chloe will be very glad to see you," said the lady. "She is just pining for some colored man to sit in the kitchen and put his feet in the stove."

"De Lord he'p my soul, Miss Sally!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, "how you does go on! Long ez de sun shine like she do, I don't wanter go in no kitchen en see Chlory wipe out de tray wid de towel en make up dough widout washin' her han's. Bless you, no! I done been too sick, ma'm, fer ter be settin' in de house." Here the old negro had a fit of coughing which was severe enough to excite Miss Sally's pity.

"You ought to be in bed now," she said. "What are you running about on the damp ground for? That cough is enough to kill you."

"Miss Sally, please ma'm don't excuse me er runnin'," said Uncle Remus, solemnly. "I'm dat weak dat it tire me mos' ez much fer ter scratch my head ez it useter ter plough a ten acre fiel'. Dat's de Lord's trufe. En ez ter dat cough — wellum, hit ain't nothin' 't all like de cough what I had when I wuz sick sho' nuff. One time I tuck'n coughed twel I busted a button off'n my shirt collar. I 'speck dat's one er de reasons I got well, bekaze my ole 'oman, she pick up dat button, she did, en make a great 'miration over it. She tuck'n tol' some er de yuther niggers dat I wuz so

sick I coughed up collar-buttons. En den here dey come — big en little, old en young — peepin' in de do', en trompin' thoo de house.

"One ole nigger 'oman stuck her head in de do' en 'low, 'Well, well, well! When folks commence fer ter cough up collar-buttons, de las' day ain't fur off.' Wid dat, ma'm, I up'd wid one er my shoes, en ef she had n't 'a' jerked her head back so quick I sho'ly would a ruint her. Wellum, dat het things mighty hot, kase my ole 'oman en de yuther niggers what wuz hangin' 'roun', waitin' fer me ter take my dram so dey kin git a whiff un it, dey helt up der han's en 'low dat de nigger 'oman what I flung de shoe at wuz de headquarters er de Cha'ty Buryin' S'ciety er de Bruthin' en Sister'n er Jeycho."

"What was that?" asked the lady, "the Charity Burying Society of the Brothers and Sisters of Jericho?"

"Dat what dey call it, ma'm. I dunner how dey does, ner what dey does. But dar I wuz layin' flat er my back en done flung my shoe at de headquarters er de whole shebang. I done tuck er dram des 'fo' I split de do' jam' wid my shoe, en de niggers all make so much fuss 'bout it dat I got up en tuck an'er

one. Dis sorter hep'd matters, yit I could lay dar wid my eyes shot en de pain in my chist, en hear dem niggers gwine on kaze I let drive at dat ole nigger 'oman.

"Dey talk 'bout dis eve'y day, en eve'y time dey talk 'bout it, I tuck an'er dram. Den one time whiles dey thunk I wuz sleep, I hear um say dat de ole nigger 'oman done got intranced on account er my flingin' de shoe. Dey say she was layin' stretch out col' en stiff, wid her eyes wide open en her thum's p'intin' up'ards, en a-talkin' in her sleep same ez de man what sells toof-powder on de street. Dey say she done call Remus' name nine times, which make de odd number, en eve'y time she call it she roll her eyes en groan like a cow what done lose her cud. Dey 'low dat she done see sights in de hev'ms, en hear um call de roll, en de name er Remus wan't dar.

"Wellum, wid dat I riz en tuck an'er dram, en I sot on de side de bed en say ter de ole 'oman: 'Tabby,' sez I, 'how many niggers is dey in here dat don't b'long here? I want you ter count um,' sez I, 'kaze I'm gwine in a trance myse'f, en when I wake up I want ter know des 'zackly how much damage been done. Des count em,' sez I, 'en I'll mark

um down on de wall here wid my finger-nail, en dem what gits kill't in de scuffle I 'll scratch out when I comes out'n de trance. Dat ole nigger 'oman,' sez I, 'kin lay dar on de flo' at her house en roll her eye-balls en work de skin on her head backerds en forrerds, but I 'm diff'unt,' sez I. 'Dat ain't de kind er trance w'at comes over me. I got ter have all de han' roomance what I kin git. Ef any er deze here ladies en gents,' sez I, 'has got any walkin' canes en parasols dat dey don't want broke, dey better kyar um outside en lef' um dar, kaze I feels my kinder trance comin' on,' sez I.

"Wellum, I tuck an'er dram, en den I 'gun ter open en shet my mouf sorter quick like. I tuck notice dat some er de niggers sidled to'rds de do'. Den I 'gun ter back out'n de bed on my all-fours, en when I hit de flo' I fetched a blate mo' samer dan a yearlin' calf. It 's de Lord's trufe, Miss Sally, 'fo' I kin turn 'roun' dey want no niggers nowhars aroun', 'ceppin' me en de bottle er dram. Der wuz a shuffle en a rustle, en dey wuz all gone. En my ole 'oman, she went wid um, kaze she say she dunner what gwineter happen nex'."

"You were drunk," said the lady, severely.

"Yassum," said Uncle Remus, serenely, "I 'speck so. I been feelin' better ever sence, en I des thunk I 'd creep 'roun' dis mornin' en see how you en Mars John gittin' on. I ain't got no big appetite like I useter have, but I 'lowed maybe you would n't keer ef I sot out here in de sun whar I kin smell de vittles a-cookin'."

The lady looked at the old negro curiously a moment, and then went into the house laughing.

XV.

UNCLE REMUS'S IDEAS OF CONJURING.

"I HEAR talk how you been cunjured," said Chloe, as Uncle Remus took his seat in the kitchen one morning.

"Who sesso?" inquired the old man, smiling placidly.

"Dat what dey tells me," said Chloe, with a serious air. "I hear lots er folks sesso. Oh, you kin laugh, man, but ef dey git atter yer right straight, dey 'll make you laugh on t'er side er yo' mouf. Dey cert'n'y will."

Uncle Remus rubbed his chin thoughtfully and shook his head, but continued to smile.

"Dey tells me," Chloe went on in a louder and more emphatic tone, "dat de time when you wuz sick you tuck'n flung yo' shoe at Miss Ca'line Simpson, an' she got mad an' went home an' 'come intranced, an' now she gwine cunjur' you."

"I hear tell so," said Uncle Remus, serenely. "She say I 'm a white folks nigger anyhow, en

darfo' she gwine ter ring in de sperrets on me. Hit come right straight. Dey ain't no hearsay 'bout it. She done sesso."

"Ain't you skeer'd?" asked Chloe in a confidential tone.

"What I skeer'd un?" inquired Uncle Remus, with a show of indignation. "Dat ar nigger 'oman ain't got none de 'vantage er me when it come down ter old-time cunj'in'. Ef she is, whar she git it? My mammy talked wid sperrets, an' my daddy walked in his sleep. How come I can't do mo' cunj'in' in one minnit dan what she kin do in a mont'?"

"Man, I b'lieve you — dat I does!" exclaimed Chloe, edging away from Uncle Remus and regarding him curiously.

"I want ter ax you dis," the old man continued: "is dat nigger 'oman fat, er is she lean?"

"She so fat she skacely kin walk," replied Chloe.

"Well, den," said Uncle Remus, "how she gwine cunjur' anybody? Tell me dat. I bin seein' cunjur' folks ever sence I wan't no bigger dan a skin't rabbit, en I ain't never see no fat un yit. Dey er all so lean dat it look like der skin done swunk on der bones, en when

dey grin you kin see der yaller toofies. Now you des watch um."

"Go 'way, man!" exclaimed Chloe. "De Lord knows I don't wanter see none un um, much less watch um."

"De men folks what do de cunj'in'," Uncle Remus went on, "is diffunt. De 'oman folks is lean, but de men folks, dey er lean er fat ez de case may be. You can't tell de cunjur' man 'less'n you watch his eye right closte. Ef he show too much er de eyeball en dey 's a streak er red splashed roun' de cornder, you watch 'im. You hear me now — you watch 'im!"

"What de name er de Lord I want ter watch 'im fer?" asked Chloe, nervously. "I ain't gwine to be watchin' no cunjur' man. I boun' you I got my work ter do."

"I done bin had de 'sperience un it," the old man continued. "I done bin see um work der tricks, en I done larnt all der signs."

"Well, don't come projickin' wid me," exclaimed Chloe. "Yo' eye look red now — dat it do!"

"I kin turn dat ar broom dar on de eend, en name it fer you," said Uncle Remus, pursuing the subject, "en you 'll hatter pack up

yo' duds en leave here. I kin fling it down in de flo', en ef you step 'cross it, you 'll hatter min' eve'y word I say. I kin take de same broom en go out dar in de yard en sweep your track away, en you 'll hatter leave 'fo' sundown. I kin go out dar en pick up de san' what you done make yo' track in, en fling it in runnin' water, en you 'll hatter travel ez fur ez de water does. You see ole Remus settin' here like he got no sense. You better keep yo' eye on 'im, mon!"

"What de name er de Lord is I done ter you?" cried Chloe, stopping short in her work, and staring at Uncle Remus. "You comes en you goes, en I ain't never pester you sence you been a man an' I been a 'oman. I dunner what make you keep on atter me. Ef you wanter come cunj'in' anybody, you better cunjur' dat ar nigger 'oman what 'low she gwine lay a spell on ter you."

"Bless yo' soul, chile!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, with a chuckle, "she done bin fixt. I ain't mo' dan git de word dat she gwine trick me dan I sot myself in motion. Now whar is she? Des tell me dat! Wharbouts is she?"

"Is she done daid?" asked Chloe in a subdued tone.

"You go down dar whar she been livin'," said Uncle Remus, with an air of mystery, "en ax wharbouts is she, en den come back en tell me what de folks say. You may n't b'lieve me, but you bleedz ter b'lieve dem. Ef you ax me wharbouts is she, I 'll up en tell you she 's gone; ef you ax t'er folks wharbouts is she, dey 'll up en tell you she 's gone — no mo', no less."

"What 'come un her?" inquired Chloe, with open-eyed astonishment.

"Hit 's des like I tell you," replied Uncle Remus, solemnly. "She done make her disappearance."

"Is you done cunju'd her?" asked Chloe.

"Not what you might call right straight up en down cunj'in'," said the old man. "I des sorter wunk my eye en shuck my finger, en de nigger 'oman went en ax'd her 'quaintances good-by. I look like I ain't much, en I don't 'speck I is; but nummine! You des watch me!"

"Now!" exclaimed Chloe, "why n't you tell me what you done ter de 'oman?"

"Well," said Uncle Remus, "'t ain't no mighty long tale. Atter dat nigger 'oman make her brags dat she gwine cunjur' me, she

had de inshurance fer ter come ter my house. I was settin' down by de fier, me an' William Henry, when I hear her come in de nex' room en pass de time er day wid my ole 'oman. I raise my finger at William Henry so he 'd be still, en den I beckon 'im ter come close, en den I say dat eve'yt'ing I tell 'im ter do, he must talk out loud en say, 'I know right whar it 's at.' Den I make 'im set down. Atter while I holler out: —

"'You William Henry!' He holler back, 'Suh!' I say, 'I want you ter ketch me sev'n spring lizzuds.' He 'low, 'Yasser, I know right whar dey at.' De folks in de nex' room stop talkin', en I know'd in reason dey wuz lis'nen'. Den I holler out: —

"'William Henry!' He holler back, 'Suh!' I say, 'I want you ter git me two snake skins.' He 'low, 'Yasser, I know right whar dey at.' De nigger 'oman kep' on lis'nen'. Den I holler out: —

"'William Henry!' He holler back, 'Suh!' I say, 'I want you ter fetch me two toad frogs.' He 'low, 'Yasser, I know right whar dey at.'

"I sot dar en waited a little bit, en den I hear de nigger 'oman say she bleedz ter go, en

de nex' day word come dat she done move 'way."

Chloe drew a long breath of relief. She had expected something sensational, and had prepared herself to be shocked. The disappointment irritated her.

"Does you call dat cunj'in'?" she exclaimed scornfully.

"Hit des ez good ez cunj'in'," said Uncle Remus. "What mo' does you want? Does you want ter be cunju'd?"

"No," said Chloe, in a more amiable tone, "en I don't want you ter be projickin' long er me, nudder."

"Well, den," said the old man, "don't be so high-stringity in yo' talk. Fus' news you know, you 'll wish dey wan't no cunjurments. You bin hidin' pie fum me dis long time, en folks what hides pie ain't got no kinder showin' when it cums ter hard-down cunj'in'."

"Well, de Lord knows, man, I don't begrudge you no pie. Here 's a piece I bin savin' fer you." Chloe lifted a tin cover and brought forth a large piece.

"Aha!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, "did I hafter cunjur' you ter git dis pie?"

XVI.

VIEWS ON THE AFRICAN EXODUS.

THE Southern papers have not devoted much attention to the movement that is known as the "African exodus." This is to be accounted for by the fact that the modern reporter, sharp as he is, has never yet learned the art of getting information from the negroes, particularly if they are disposed to hold their tongues. In truth, the African exodus, so called, is important as well as serious. It is more extensive than the newspaper men have any idea of, and has made a very deep impression on a certain class of negroes.

Uncle Remus's "Miss Sally" discovered this fact the other morning, while she was attending to her domestic duties, and heard a very interesting controversy in the bargain. The old man went into the kitchen, as was his custom, before going to his work. On this particular morning Chloe, the cook, seemed to be in a very good humor. She saluted Uncle

Remus cordially, and then asked, in a tone of friendly solicitude: —

"Ain't you gwine home?"

"Ain't I gwine whar?" responded Uncle Remus.

"Ain't you gwine home? Lots of 'em gwine home."

"What I gwine home fer, when I des come fum dar?" inquired the old man, looking at Chloe with a puzzled expression.

"Ah, Lord!" exclaimed Chloe, wiping the flour from her fat arms with her apron, "you ain't bin dar yit. You better git ready an' go."

"How come I ain't bin dar? You don't speck I bin trollopin' 'roun' fum post to pillar de whole blessed night, does you?"

"I went down ter Zion Chapel las' night, an' dar I hear Brer John Henry. Man, suh! I ain't never hear anybody talk purtier dan what Brer John Henry did. He say, he did, dat we all mus' go back home — go back ter Af'ica whar we come fum; an' he kep' on tell he make us all feel right thankful. Sis 'Ria she jump up an' holler bless God! she gwine, an' den all un us holler dat we gwine. I hear talk er deze white folks preachers — man! dey

can't hol' Brer John Henry a candle when he git up dar in de pulpit an' begin ter rock fum side ter side an' swing his arms. You better come on an' go wid us — better come on an' go home."

"Who — me?" exclaimed Uncle Remus indignantly. "What I gwine to do in Affiky? I ain't no Affikin nigger."

"Yes, you is, too," said Chloe, somewhat wrought up, "kaze Brer John Henry say dat colored folks all come fum Af'ica, an' dem what 'ny it speaks fum ign'ance uv de sperrit."

"What he know 'bout it?" asked Uncle Remus, scornfully. "Down yander in Putmon County dat ar same preacher call hisse'f Tom Perryman, an' now he come up here en call hisse'f John Henry. Ef he ain't know his own name, how come he know so much 'bout Affiky? Now des tell me dat."

"Ah, Lord!" exclaimed Chloe with indescribable unction. "Brer John Henry know. He could n't a-talked no purtier dan ef he 'd 'a' done seed it. An' we er all a-gwine. I gi' 'im a dollar, an' Sis 'Ria gi' 'im a dollar, an' all un um gi' 'im a dollar."

"Who got de money?" inquired Uncle Remus. "Dish yer John Henry?"

"No," said Chloe, "dey wuz a man dar, an' he tuck de money. He come fum 'way off yander, an' he say he gwine take it an' buy tickets ter Af'ica fer us all. He say he done got de tickets, and he gwine ter 'stribbit um 'fo' long, des soon ez de ship come in."

Here Uncle Remus uttered a dismal groan. "Wuz you dar when dat ar Tom-en-Jerry preacher" —

"He name Brer John Henry," exclaimed Chloe, indignantly, "dat what he name."

"Wuz you dar, Chlory," Uncle Remus went on, "when dat ar John Henry preacher en de t'er man went 'roun' behime de house en 'vided de money out?"

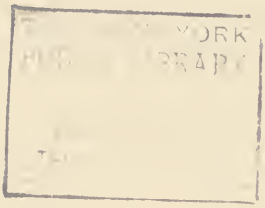
"No, I wan't!" exclaimed Chloe, turning on the old man viciously, "an' nobody else ain't seed um — dat 's what!"

"I 'speck dat 's so," said Uncle Remus, rubbing his beard thoughtfully. "Dey er lots too slick fer dat."

"I dunner what you want ter run down yo' own color fer," remarked Chloe. "Better leave dat fer de white folks."

"Whose color?" inquired Uncle Remus, with angry emphasis. "Ef dat ar John Henry ain't paint hisse'f, he 's a rank merlatter ez de

GRAVE OF JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS


YORK

sun ever shined on. He ain't none er my color. I 'm a full-blood nigger, myse'f, en I come fum Ferginny."

"Dat what make me say what I does," said Chloe, in a tone at once friendly and confidential. "Bein' ez you is a full-blood nigger, you oughter come en go 'long wid us. You oughter come en go home ter Af'ica wid us. Brer John Henry say dat de full-blood colored folks is got mo' p'int-blank rights in Af'ica dan all de yuther folks put together. Brer John Henry cert'n'y say dem ve'y words."

Uncle Remus leaned against the wall and groaned. Chloe, ignoring the old man's apparent contempt for the scheme, continued after a little pause: —

"Brer John Henry say we all des ez well go now ez to go later. He say dat Af'ica b'longs ter de colored folks by good rights, en he say dey oughter go en take occupiance er de lan' 'fo' it git tooken up by white folks. He say dat all dis country whar we at now b'longs ter de Injuns, en dey er gwine ter come back here en take it. Dey done broke loose out yander now; an' Brer John Henry say dat what dey fightin' fer, on account er de white folks takin' der lan' fum um, an'

when dey come, de colored folks what stay here is got ter fight 'em. Brer John Henry is sholy say dat, kaze I hear 'im wid my own years."

The only comment that Uncle Remus made was a heart-rending groan.

"You may well ter groan," Chloe went on. "You may well ter groan ef you ain't gwine home wid us, kaze we er all a-gwine. De colored folks is done commence ter move. Dey er comin' here fum Texas an' fum all out dar."

"Comin' whar?" asked Uncle Remus.

"Comin' here, ter dis ve'y town."

"Is dis Affiky?"

"No, 't ain't, but it 's on de road, an' de colored folks is a-movin'."

"How long is dey gwine ter stay 'roun' yer?" Uncle Remus inquired, straightening himself up.

"Tell de ship come," said Chloe.

"Ah-yi!" exclaimed Uncle Remus. "Twel de ship come. Dat des 'zactly what I 'lowed. Dey er gwine ter stay twel de ship come, en betwixt dis time en dat, what dey gwine do? Who gwine ter feed um?"

"Dey gwine ter feed deyse'f," said Chloe,

indignantly. "Who feed 'em whar dey come fum? Dey had ter work dar — let 'em work here."

"I ain't so mighty sho' en certain 'bout der workin'," said Uncle Remus placidly. "I bin noticin' dis, dat whar you fin' niggers so keen fer ter traipse about fum post ter pillar, dey ain't apt ter hurt deyse'f wid work. Some un um bin runnin' fum work ever sence de farmin' days wuz over. An' dey er makin' a great to-do 'bout gwine off ter Affiky, kaze somebody done gone en tole um dat all dey got ter do atter dey git dar is ter set in de sun en watch de truck grow. All dey got ter do is ter set dar en let der ha'r grow bushy. Ain't de man what wuz 'vidin' out de money wid dat ar John Henry preacher a white man?"

"What ef he is?" responded Chloe, snappishly; "what dat got ter do wid it?"

"Dar 't is!" exclaimed Uncle Remus triumphantly. "You dunner whar he come fum. You dunner how long he gwine stay. You dunner whar he gwine. Yit de niggers is givin' 'im der money, en makin' ready ter go ter Affiky. Dey er des er swarmin' ter Atlanta en makin' ready ter cross de Atlanta Ocean, when 't won't mo' dan kyar um 'cross

town en back. En yit, here you is talkin' ter me 'bout bein' er white folks nigger."

"I don't keer; I don't keer!" exclaimed Chloe. "I know what Brer John Henry say."

"Ef dat ar white man wuz ter come honeyin' 'roun' me," continued Uncle Remus, "I 'd do 'im like de Coon did de Polecat."

"Go off fum here!" said Chloe. "What de Coon do?"

"One mighty col' day, Mr. Coon wuz layin' up in his house, which he call it de Holler Tree Tavern. He wuz all quiled up in dar, warm en snug, when he year somebody knockin' at de do'. Hit 'uz Mr. Polecat. Mr. Coon say, 'Who dar?' Mr. Polecat say, 'Hit 's me.' Den Mr. Coon say, 'What you want?' Mr. Polecat say, 'Open de do', I wanter come in en warm.' Mr. Coon say, 'What you name?' Mr. Polecat say, 'I 'm name Coony Coon, fum Coon Holler. I 'm de bes' frien' yo' gran'pa is ever had.' Mr. Coon crack de do' en peep at 'im, en den he say, 'Uh-uh! you don't look like coon, you don't walk like coon, you don't talk like coon, en I know mighty well you don't smell like coon. You can't come in here!' "

"I say it!" exclaimed Chloe, restored to good humor.

"Miss Sally," said Uncle Remus, turning to the lady of the house, who came in just then, "I 'm gwine 'roun' en tighten up de chicken-house en de sto'-room twel dish yer Affikin move is done blowed over. Chlory dar"—

"Miss Sally!" exclaimed Chloe, "I 'll hatter quit here ef you don't make dat ole nigger man go on 'bout his business. He been in here quoilin' de whole blessed mornin'."

But before the lady could say anything, Uncle Remus was rapidly walking across the yard with a rake on his shoulder.

XVII.

UNCLE REMUS ON AN ELECTRIC CAR.

One pleasant day not long ago Uncle Remus concluded that he would take a ride on the electric car. He had been engaged for some time in making up his mind. There was enough of mystery about the means of locomotion to make him somewhat skittish. In point of fact, he had his own private opinion, fortified by an abundant supply of superstition, in regard to the whole matter. Nevertheless, he decided to make a little excursion on the car. He saw other people riding, and what they did he could do.

So the old man was on hand when the car came down to the starting-point, where there is a wait of five minutes. He watched the conductor reverse the contrivance that connects the motor with the overhead wire, and then he got on. He smiled as he took his seat, but even his smile betrayed his anxiety. He fumbled about in his pockets until he

found a quarter, which he proffered to the motor-man.

"Don't be in a hurry, old man," said that important functionary; "the conductor will get your fare."

"Yasser," said Uncle Remus. "On de t'er line whar dey got muels, I hatter gi' de money ter de driver — dat w'at make I han' it ter you. Dish yer ain't de same kind er kyar. Hit look mighty blank out dar. I 'd feel lots better ef dey wuz a waggin tongue stickin' out dar, er some muels er sump'n."

"Why, if we had mules out there," said the motor-man, with a consequential air, "they would n't last five minutes. We 'd run over 'em. We 'd grind them into jiblets."

"You hear dat!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, solemnly, addressing no one in particular. After a pause, the old man continued: —

"Boss, is de stuff what make dish yer kyar go — is she de same ez dat w'at make de thunder?"

"The very same," said the man.

"Ain't you skeer'd?" asked Uncle Remus.

"Naw!" said the motor-man; "so long as it don't singe the hair on my head, I ain't afraid."

"Well, suh!" exclaimed the old negro, looking at the man admiringly. Then, after a little pause: "Boss, does you keep de truck in dat ar churn dar?" indicating the brass cylinder containing the machinery for turning on and shutting off the electric current.

Something in Uncle Remus's tone — some suggestion of unusual politeness and affability — caused the motor-man to look at him more closely, and the look was followed by a pleasant smile, which was at once a recognition of and a tribute to the old negro's attitude of respectful anxiety.

"Yes," said the motor-man, "we keep it in here," touching the cylinder with his foot, "and when we want any we just turn it on."

"Same like you draw 'simmon beer out'n a bar'l?" suggested Uncle Remus.

"Yes," said the motor-man, "somewhat similarly."

"Sometimes," said Uncle Remus, "de beer got sech a head on 'er dat she 'll fly out en flew all over you. Do dat truck do dat away?"

"It ain't never done it yet," replied the motor-man, "and when it does, I want to be plumb away from here."

"Ef it 's de same kinder truck what busts aloose in de elements," said Uncle Remus, "dey must be enough un it in dat churn dar ter make thunder endurin' a whole summer."

The motor-man made no reply to this. In response to a signal from the conductor, he struck the gong sharply with his foot, causing Uncle Remus to dodge as if he had been shot at, turned on the current, and started the car. A negro girl sitting opposite Uncle Remus put a corner of her shawl in her mouth and tittered. The old man turned on her fiercely and exclaimed: —

"Whar yo' manners, gal? Is dat de way yo' mammy l'arn you — come gigglin' in comp'ny?"

"De Lord knows I ain't doin' nothin'," said the girl, twisting herself around on the seat. "I des settin' here ten'in' to my own business. I wan't sayin' a blessed word to nobody."

"Who you grinnin' an' gigglin' at, den?" asked Uncle Remus severely. "You 'll be a-gwine on dat away some er deze yer odd-come-shorts an' you 'll break yo' puckerin' string. Den what you gwine ter do?"

"Mister," said the girl, turning to the conductor, "I wish you 'd please, sir, make dis

colored man lemme 'lone. I ain't doin' a blessed thing to him."

"Fare!" exclaimed the conductor. He spoke so loudly and so unexpectedly that Uncle Remus dodged again, and this time he flung his right arm above his head as if to defend himself. This gave the angry girl the opportunity she wanted.

"Des look at dat ole man!" she cried. "I b'lieve he goin' crazy." Then she began to laugh again. Even the conductor smiled, and Uncle Remus, perceiving this, smiled himself, but somewhat grimly.

As the conductor was giving him his change, a peculiar groaning sound issued from the motor underneath the car.

"Boss," said Uncle Remus, somewhat anxiously, "wharbouts is all dat zoonin'? Hit soun' like de win' blowin' thoo a knot-hole."

"It 's the current," said the conductor.

"Yasser!" exclaimed Uncle Remus. "Dat what I 'low'd hit wuz. Hit bawlin' down dar like a steer calf lef' out in de rain. She ain't gwine ter bus' loose en t'ar up nothin', is she, boss?"

"Not right now, I reckon," replied the conductor.

This was very unsatisfactory to the old negro, particularly as the zooning and groaning sound continued to grow louder. He looked out of the window, first on one side and then on the other, and then rose and seized the handstrap and gave it a jerk. Seeing that the car kept on, Uncle Remus gave the strap a more violent tug, and then another and another.

"Ef she 's a-runnin' away," he exclaimed, "des say de word en I 'll t'ar up de flo', but I 'll git out'n here."

Seeing the old man's predicament, the conductor pulled the bell, and the car stopped.

"Dat what make I say what I does," exclaimed Uncle Remus, with some show of indignation, as he shuffled towards the door. "I 'm gwine ter tell you all good-by. You kin set dar en listen at de interruptions gwine on in de intruls er dish yer kyar, but I 'm gwine, I am. I done foun' out long ergo dat no 'spectable nigger ain't got no business gwine whar white folks fear'd to resk der muels. I wish you mighty well!"

XVIII.

WILLIAM HENRY AT SCHOOL.

Uncle Remus was working in his Miss Sally's flower garden recently, spading up the beds and dividing and replanting bulbs. The lady, who takes great pride in her flowers and plants, was superintending the work. The old man was not in a very talkative humor at first, but his humor changed when his Miss Sally began to inquire about his grandson.

"Was n't he named William Henry?" she asked.

"Yassum," said Uncle Remus with a sigh, "dat what Lucindy call 'im. I tuck'n tol' 'er den dat she wuz loadin' 'im down wid name, but dat ar nigger man what she cook en wash fer, he named 'im atter some er his kin what bin in de chain-gang. He bleedz ter bin in de chain-gang, kaze he 's a town nigger, en I ain't never is lay eyes on 'im."

"How old is William Henry?" asked the lady.

"Wellum," said Uncle Remus, reflecting a little, "he wuz born endurin' er de year when Mars John kicked up sech a racket kaze he had dat ar bile on de back er de neck."

"Let me see," said Miss Sally. "That was in 1878. William Henry must be thirteen years old."

"Yassum, I 'speck he is. I dunner what gwine ter come un 'im, kaze Lucindy done gone clean back on 'er raisin'. I bin mighty worried 'bout dat boy. My ole 'oman say he take atter me. I ain't never see no mo' likelier nigger dan what dat boy is, yit he sholy gwine ter be ruint. Lucindy come ter my house yistiddy en ax me is I seed William Henry, en I tol' 'er no I ain't, en I did n't want ter see 'im, kaze she raisin' 'im up fer de chain-gang. Den Lucindy say she sent 'im ter school, en he done make his disappearance a mont' ago, en she ain't never tell me kaze she skeer'd I gwine ter git mad." Uncle Remus paused, looking around as if in search of a clue to some word or phrase by which he might describe his feelings. Not finding any, he groaned and went to digging again.

"What did you say to her?" asked Miss Sally.

"Now, Miss Sally, you bin knowin' me long nuff ter know purty well what I tol' dat gal. Mon, I gin 'er one er de ole-time talks. She 's a grown married 'oman, en got children yit, but I des grabbed up a brush-broom, and I des nat'rally frailed her out. I did dat. En nex' time I see 'er I 'm gwine frail 'er ag'in — I don't keer whar she at. You know yo'se'f, Miss Sally," the old man went on, "dat I tried ter raise dat ar gal right. All de time she staid wid me en 'er mammy, it look like butter won't melt in 'er mouf, but des ez soon ez she marry dat ar hotel nigger what w'ar streaked britches en a stove-pipe hat, she look like she gwine ter run 'stracted. En den, on top er dat, she tuck en jinded deze yer Breedin' Dove en Rastlin' Jacob S'ciety. Salt ain't gwine ter save dat kin' er nigger 'oman, I don't keer ef she is my own daughter. I ain't had no trouble wid de nigger man w'at marry 'er. I done tol' 'im long ergo dat ef he cut any town shines wid me he gwine ter git hurted. Streaked britches en calico shirts don't pass wid me. I git nuff er dem mos' quick ez I does dat ar truck what Mars John stuck under my nose t'er day."

"Hartshorn?" suggested Miss Sally.

"Yassum, I 'speck so. She sholy is rank, mo' speshually when she git in yo' nose en up dar behime yo' eyeballs. Ef I 'd been boun' by law ter take one mo' whiff er dat truck, 't would er bin good-by Remus, sho. Miss Sally, Mars John gwine ter kill some er deze yer niggers, projickin' 'roun' dat away, en den hit 'll be all you kin do ter keep 'im out'n de calaboose.

"What is the matter with Lucindy?" asked Miss Sally, taking the old man back to his subject.

"Wellum, she done tetotally ruint wid deze yer town idees. De fus' time I know'd she gwine wrong, she come ter my house one night wid dat hotel nigger er hern en some yuther gals. She come in de do' a-gigglin', en she up en 'low, she did, 'Howdy, popper!' I look at 'er en say, 'Which?' Den she say, 'Howdy, popper!' I riz, I did, en grab my cane en 'low, 'Who you foolin' 'long wid, you triflin' huzzy? Ef you dast ter come poppin' me, I'll pop you; I'll lay you out in de flo'. Ef I ain't yo' daddy, I ain't no kin ter you.' Yassum, I said dem ve'y words.

"Dat de fus' time," the old man continued, "dat I tuck notice she 'uz gwine wrong. Den

she tuck'n j'inded deze yer Breedin' Dove en Rastlin' Jacob S'ciety. Den she tuck er notion dat she bleedz to sen' William Henry to school — a great big boy like dat. But William Henry, he bin stayin' at my house mos' much ez he is at home, en me en my ole 'oman done l'arn 'im some sense. Wid me, a nigger is done gradjywated de minnit you puts de plough handles in his han's, en dat ar William Henry plenty big fer ter be follerin' de plough right now. De nex' time I see Lucindy — Yander he is right now!" exclaimed Uncle Remus. He had caught sight of William Henry coming through the gate. "Come yer, you triflin' rascal! en fetch dat ar bar'l hoop wid you. Whar you bin? Don't you come walkin' up yer wid yo' hat on. I 'll jump on you, mon, en tromple you. Come yer, suh, en tell yo' Miss Sally howdy. Whar yo' manners?"

William Henry, an unusually bright and pleasant-looking negro boy, came up the walk, shining his white teeth and swinging himself with the vigor of youth. He wore on his smiling face an expression of mingled intelligence, shrewdness, and mischievousness.

"Howdy, Miss Sally; howdy, daddy," he said, taking off his hat.

"You well ter say howdy!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, with a great affectation of anger. "You kin say yo' pra'rs en thank yo' stars dat yo' Miss Sally out yer whar she kin pertec' you, kaze ef I had you out by yo'se'f, I lay I 'd bust you wide open. What kinder way is dish yer you got, playin' de runaway nigger?"

William Henry swung his hat from side to side, and looked at everything in sight except Uncle Remus. He was evidently embarrassed.

"Have you been running away, William Henry?" asked Miss Sally.

"Yes 'm," said William Henry. "I been stayin' 'way fum my mammy an' pappy, but I ain't been runnin' 'way fum daddy dar. Daddy know I ain't been hidin' fum him, 'cause how come I'm here, ef I bin hidin' fum 'im?"

"Why did you run away?" asked the lady.

"Hol' up yer head, nigger, en make answer ter Miss Sally when she ax you!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, as the boy hesitated.

"Mammy took an' tol' me dat I got to go to school," said William Henry, "an' she know all de time I dunner nothin' 't all 'bout no books. Den pappy, he say I got to go,

an' he took an' went wid me. De nigger man what wus teachin', he gimme er book an' tol' me wharbouts to set at. I sot dar an' done des like de balance un um."

"Did you study any?" asked Miss Sally.

"Yes 'm, I 'speck so," said William Henry. "De teacher wuz a chunky little nigger, an' eve'y time he turn his back de yuthers would cut up, an' den when he 'd turn 'roun' dey 'd be a-lookin' in der books. Dat de way I done. Bimeby de teacher call me up an' ax me kin I read, an' I say, 'No, suh, 'cause it make my head ache.' Den he ax me to read some, an' I say I got de headache right den. He look at de book an' say she 's upperside down. I say, 'Yasser, I 'speck she is.' He say, 'How you gwine read dat away?' an' I say, I wan't gwine read dat away. He ax me what I gwine do, an' I say, I dunno what I gwine do. He ax me ef I kin read wid books upperside down, an' I say not at de time when I got de headache. Den he tell me to turn de book 'roun' an' go set down."

"You hear dat, Miss Sally!" exclaimed Uncle Remus in an exultant tone. "Dat what deze town niggers call teachin' school."

"Yes 'm," said William Henry, growing

more confident. "Dat man tol' me ter go set down, an' I went an' sot down. Bimeby he come 'long an' say my book is upperside down, an' he ax me how come she upperside down. I say I dunno, 'ceppin' she one er dem kinder books what stays upperside down. Den he took an' lam me side de head."

"I wish ter de Lord I 'd 'a' bin dar," said Uncle Remus.

"I had a rock in my pocket," continued William Henry, "an' when he went struttin' off I upped wid it an' hit 'im a clip right 'pon top de head. Den I made a break fer de do' an' run'd off."

"Whar you bin since den?" asked Uncle Remus.

"I bin waitin' in a bod'in' house," said the boy.

"How come you ain't dar now?"

"'Cause dey had batter cakes fer brekkus dis mornin', an' de lady say dat two un um wuz missin', an' soon 's dey got to talkin' dat away I say I gwine to see daddy, 'cause I know'd dey wuz gwine to lay it on me. It de fust time I ever is see folks count de batter cakes."

"Look yer, boy," exclaimed Uncle Remus,

as his Miss Sally went into the house laughing, "you go on ter my house en tell yo' granny I sont you, en ef Lucindy come dar atter you, you tell 'er I 'm gwine ter larn 'er some sense. Go on now!"

XIX.

UNCLE REMUS'S GRANDSON GETS INTO SERIOUS TROUBLE.

"MISS SALLY," said Uncle Remus, as he came around the corner of the house, leading William Henry, his grandson, by the coat collar, "is Mars John gone down town yit?"

"Long ago," said the lady. "Why, it 's after eight o'clock."

"Now, ain't dat too bad!" exclaimed Uncle Remus. "I bleedz ter see Mars John, but ef I starts down town wid dish yer young vilyun, dey 'll take 'im away fum me en put 'im in de chain-gang 'fo' I kin git out'n sight er de house. Dey er atter 'im right now — I des knows dey is. Dey er bleedz ter be atter 'im."

William Henry was the picture of despair. All he could do was to whimper and cry, "Don't let 'em git me, daddy — don't let 'em git me."

"What is the matter with the child?" asked the lady.

"You call 'im chile, Miss Sally?" exclaimed Uncle Remus. "He older in sin dan ole man Methuselum. Miss Sally, you don't know nothin' 't all 'bout dat nigger. He 's rank pizen. He des got enough er de new issue nigger in 'im fer ter sen' 'im fum de calaboose ter de chain-gang, en fum de chain-gang ter de gallus."

"But what has he been doing?" the lady inquired, with some interest. She had n't seen Uncle Remus so thoroughly wrought up in many a long day.

"I declar' ter gracious, Miss Sally," said the old man, with emphasis, "'twixt what I knows, en dat what I bin hear talk un, en dat what I 'spicions, I could set right flat on de groun' here en take up yo' time fer mighty nigh a whole week tellin' you 'bout de doin's er dish yer nigger. I done seed all kinder niggers endurin' er my day en time, but dis is de mos' outdoinest, owdacious nigger what I ever is come 'cross. Straighten up here, you wall-eyed Affikin, 'fo' I jump on you en tromple you!" This was addressed to the shrinking and penitent William Henry.

"Turn him loose and stop jerking him around," said the lady. "Can't you tell me

what he has done?" The serious, almost severe tone of the lady subdued Uncle Remus's violence somewhat.

"Well, you know, Miss Sally, when dat ar nigger comeded up, out dar in de front yard, atter he bin run away fum school? Dat bin mo' dan a fortnight ago. I tuck dat boy out dar te'r side er Wes' Een', out dar whar Mr. Bill Baxter keep a dairy, en I got 'im in dar. Mr. Baxter say he look like he 's a likely boy, en he say he 'll take 'im in en gin 'im a showin' — much on account er knowin' me so long ez on account er wantin' de boy.

"Wellum, dat sorter sot me up. Dey wuz lan' dar whar he could plough en hoe, en room enough out dar fer 'im ter l'arn mo' sense in a week dan what he kin l'arn in deze yer nigger schools in sev'm year. He had eve'ything ter his han' — ash-cake en dumplin's ter eat, en pot-licker en buttermilk ter drink. I cum off en lef' 'im dar, en it make me feel mighty proud dat he wuz dar.

"It look like de people wuz made ter fit 'im. I wuz gwine 'long 'cross town, en I hear somebody holler at me, en dar wuz William Henry a-drivin' de milk waggin, en I say ter myse'f dat he dun fix, sho. It went along dis away

twel dis mornin' — en dar de town nigger showed off agin'. He flung all de fat in de fier, en I wish ter de Lord he 'd 'a' jumpt in atter it. Stan' up dar, suh, en tell yo' Miss Sally what you tole me, ef you got de face ter do it, en I know you is, kaze you er town nigger, born en bred."

"Tell me about it, William Henry," observed the lady, in a tone at once kind and reassuring. "I hope you have n't killed anybody."

"No 'm, I ain't. Daddy done got me skeer'd, an' I 'speck I is been mighty bad, but it all happen 'long des like somebody done fix it up on me. I done hurted a white man's feelin's, an' I 'speck Mr. Baxter milk waggin done all broke, but de Lord knows it wan't me done it myse'f."

"Tell me about it," said the lady.

"Wellum, Mr. Baxter, he ax me kin I drive de milk waggin, an' I say yasser, I 'speck I kin, 'ceppin' de mule run'd away, an' dey wan't nobody could drive a mule whilst he runnin' away. Mr. Baxter say all right, an' de fust mornin' er two he went 'long wid me. De mule wuz done trained. Time he struck town, he know de way he oughter go, an' eve'y time

he stop, dar wuz de place ter ring de bell, an' de folks would come out an' git de milk, an' time de mule 'ud hear me hand de medjin' cup back on de can, he 'd des switch his tail an' go on. Look like I never is to have so much fun — up dar drivin' by myse'f, an' ain't need to hol' de lines skacely.

"Well, dis mornin' when we start out, it wuz plum dark. I dunner wherrer it wuz bekaze we come out sooner, er wherrer it 's bekaze it 's so cloudy, but 'fo' we got ter whar de street lamps wuz, I could n't see de mule's tail, an' de fog des rolled aroun' in great big chunks. We went 'long, an' we got mos' done, an' bimeby we got to de place whar dey 's a great big fat cook, an' she come out an' got her milk, an' went back growlin' like she always do.

"Den it look like I hear somebody talkin' on de yuther side de waggin, an' I turn' roun', an' dar I see a white man holdin' up a tin pitcher er sump'n'. I ax 'im how much he want, an' it look to me like he say he want a quart. So I drawed de milk an' retched over an' poured it in de pitcher. I thought de man wuz holdin' it mighty funny.

"Wellum, dat ar white man jump up an'

down out dar in de road an' squall des liko sump'n' n'er hurtin' him. I look at him right closte, an' I seed dat I done poured de whole quart er milk in one er deze here year-trumpets what deff folks sticks in der years."

Here the lady laughed so heartily that it was some time before William Henry could go on.

"Yessum. He capered about out dar in de road, an' he tuck a notion dat I done it on a purpose. He danced to'rds de waggin an' made a grab fer me, but I lit out in de road, an' de mule trotted off, an' I come on an' tole daddy, an' daddy he say it 's de ruination er de worl' fer ter pour fresh milk in a year-trumpet, an' I 'speck it is, kaze I ain't never hear er anybody else doin' it."

"Cose you kin laugh, Miss Sally," said Uncle Remus in a dejected tone, "but 't ain't no laughin' matter wid me an' wid dish yer mizerbul nigger here."

"Fiddlesticks!" exclaimed the lady. "There is no harm done. Send William Henry back to Mr. Baxter. Tell him how it all was, and tell him I 'll take milk from him hereafter if William Henry is going to drive."

"Yessum!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, enthu-

siastically. "Ain't dey no harm done, Miss Sally?"

"Not the slightest," said the lady.

"Well, I thank God fer dat. Come on, nigger boy!"

XX.

THE EXPERIENCE OF WILLIAM HENRY AS A FARMER.

When Uncle Remus made his appearance one morning for the purpose of putting his Miss Sally's flower garden to rights after the heavy rains, he brought William Henry, his grandson, with him.

"He sech a no 'count nigger he can't do much," said the old man, "but he kin sorter scratch in de groun' wid dish yere hoe, en he 'll be here whar I kin knock 'im in de head ef he des so much ez bat his eyes crooked."

"Why, I thought he went back to the dairy business," said the lady. "Did n't the dairyman take him back after he had the trouble with the deaf man?"

"Oh, yessum!" exclaimed Uncle Remus. "Oh, yessum, he tuck 'im back; but dat ain't do no good. He got town nigger blood in 'im, dat boy is, en he ain't never gwine res' sati'fied twel he git in de chain-gang. Hit done proned in 'im."

"What was the matter, William Henry?" the lady asked.

"Hol' up yo' head, nigger, en talk ter Miss Sally, 'fo' I bus' you wide open wid dis hoe helve!" exclaimed Uncle Remus.

"Wellum," said William Henry, with an embarrassed air, "de man tuck me back, but he say I can't drive de milk waggin no mo', 'cause I let de muel git away dat time; an' den he sot me ter feedin' an' watchin' de stock. Countin' of de horses an' muels, dey wuz mighty nigh forty cows ter feed, an' by de time you do dat two times a day, wid de calfs a-buttin' you on de legs an' de cows a-hunchin' you wid dey horns, you 'd git mighty lonesome. Dat de way it done me. Dey ain't no town out dar. All you kin do atter you git froo yo' work is ter set on de fence an' listen at de trains a-whistlin'."

"Miss Sally," said Uncle Remus, "what I tell you 'bout dat town nigger? Talk up, boy, en tell de trufe. Don't be hatchin' no tales."

"I ain't hatchin' no tales, daddy," said William Henry. "I 'm tellin' Miss Sally de Lord's trufe, 'cause I 'speck she know how 't is when you git 'way off dar in de country whar

de whipperwills fly right in yo' face an' holler. Yit dat ain't what make me come back. I don't keer nothin' 't all 'bout bein' lonesome, 'specially when I ain't hongry, an' dat man cert'n'y gimme plenty bread an' meat."

"What was the trouble, then?" the lady inquired, with some curiosity.

"Why n't you talk up, nigger, when Miss Sally ax you?"

"Wellum," said William Henry, "dey wuz a pastur' whar we turned in de muels at night, an' ane'r pastur' whar we turned in de steers an' de dry cattle. De cows, dey wuz put up in de barn. One day des 'bout sundown, atter I done put all de stock whar dey b'longed at, one er de steers got over dar whar de muels wuz. Time I could git in dar, de muels got atter de steer, an' dey run'd 'im 'roun' like dey wuz gwine ter eat 'im up ef dey kotch 'im. I got in dar, an' I tried to shoo um off, but time dat steer see me he make right at me, an' 'fo' I kin dodge 'im he run'd right spang over me. I shot my eyes an' tried ter say some Bible word, but befo' I kin make my min' work dey had me down, an' muels an' all had done run'd right over me. De steer, he stumpled an' fell atter he done run'd over me,

an' de two muels turned somersets right 'pon top un 'im.

"Wellum, I ain't never seed nothin' like dat, an' it make me feel like I wuz dreamin'; but 't wan't no dream, 'cause dar dey lay, kickin' an' groanin', an' dar wuz my jacket on de steer's horns, an' one er de muels had my hat brim on his hine leg. No 'm, 't wan't no dream. De man hear de racket, an' he come runnin' an' ax me what de name er goodness is de matter. But I ain't pay no 'tention; I des stood dar an' gouge de dirt outen my eyes an' outen my years.

"You know how muels is, 'm. When you once git 'em hacked dey er hacked fer good; dey des give right up en roll der eyes. Dat wuz de way wid dem muels. Dey wuz plum hacked. Dey des lay dar an' roll der eyes an' grunt like sick folks. De steer, he sorter paw 'roun' an' try ter git up, but one er de muels wuz layin' right cross-ways on 'im. Den de man look at me right hard an' ax is I do all dat. I say yasser. Den he ax how come so, an' I say de muels an' de steer done run'd over me. He ax wuz I hurted anywhar, an' I say I wan't hurted nowhar much but in de feelin's, 'cause I hate ter be trompled on."

"Were the mules hurt?" asked the lady.

"No 'm!" exclaimed William Henry, in a tone which implied his belief that not even a blast of dynamite could hurt a mule, "dey want nothin' 't all de matter wid 'em. De steer might er been bruised up some, but dem muels did n't had a scratch on 'em.

"Wellum, de man might er been mad, but he look mo' like he wuz skeer'd. I tol' 'im, I say, 'Daddy want me ter come out here an' l'arn how ter be a farmer, but ef dis what you call farmin' I don't want ter git in de habits er bein' a farmer.' An' den I ax 'im ter gimme 'nough bread ter walk home on."

"Now, you hear all dat, don't you, Miss Sally?" said Uncle Remus, as William Henry paused. "Ef eve'ybody wuz votin' fer 'im, he could n't be gwine no straighter ter de chain-gang. He 's a town nigger, an' he bleedz ter go dar."

XXI.

THE GEORGIA WATERMELON.

THE weather was very warm — hot, in fact. The sun shone down with blistering effect on the tops of the houses, and on the pavements that were not protected by the friendly awnings. Yet, hot as it was, Uncle Remus sat contentedly on a platform used by the railroad as a temporary depository for bulky freight. He was sitting in the full glare of the sun, and there was not a breath of air stirring. The old man seemed to be comfortable, for, although he had his hat off, he was not fanning with it. He was gazing intently on a freight car standing on the track not far off. It was what is called a ventilated car, and was full of watermelons. While Uncle Remus was examining the car with wistful eyes, a negro, evidently employed about the railroad yard, came shuffling along, after the manner of negroes who desire to make a show of being very busy. He knew Uncle Remus, and so he cried out: —

"Howdy, Brer Remus! How yer come on?"

"Middlin' peart," said Uncle Remus, turning to look at the negro. "I ain't ez sick ez I mought be, an' yet I ain't ez well ez I wish I wuz. How you do?"

"Des kinder tollable," replied the other, with a sigh. "Dey keeps me so busy 'roun' here dat I ain't got time to do much but complain."

"How come you so busy?" asked Uncle Remus. "I bin had one eye on you since I bin settin' here, an' I ain't seed you do nuffin' yit. How come dat?"

"I bin up dar waitin' fer der boss ter come," said the other, "an' now he done come, I 'm a-gwine down here whar he 'll hatter sen' atter me when he want me. I 'm gwine ter rustle roun' an' see ef I can't git me a watermillion."

"Dey 's a whole kyar full un um," remarked Uncle Remus, sententiously.

"Dat kyar locked," said the other.

"What kinder millions is dey?" Uncle Remus asked.

"Dey come from some'rs way off yander," said the other negro.

"Dat what I 'lowed," said Uncle Remus. "Dish yere 's de fust week in June, an' dough de sun gittin' sorter warm and thankful when you set right down and let it take good aim at you, yit 't ain't time fer no state er Georgy watermillions. Not whar I come fum. Down dar in middle Georgy, ef you got a good ripe watermillion 'fo' de fofe er July, you wuz doin' mighty well."

"Law," said the other, "it done got so now dat dey 'gin ter come in 'fo' de fros' git out de groun' good."

"Dem yander millions," said Uncle Remus, gazing at the freight car with half-closed eyes, "is cert'n'y got de ole-time look 'bout um. I look at um des now, an' seem like I kin smell de Maypop blossom."

"I wish you 'd hush, Brer Remus!" exclaimed the other negro, laughing.

"Yasser! an it look like I kin see de millions shinin' in de grass in de cool er de mornin', an' it look like dey ain't nobody watchin' 'cept'n' a red-headed woodpecker in de top uv a dead pine."

"Oh, go 'way, Brer Remus! You er gittin' me all stirred up; an what good it gwine do, ef all deze yer million kyars is locked up?"

"Dem ar watermillions," continued Uncle Remus, smacking his lips, "mought be ez green on de inside ez dey is on de outside, yit dey looks des 'zackly like dem what we useter raise on de Oconee. I dunner whar dey come fum, but dey sholy is got de right kinder streaks on um."

"Dat ar kyar," said the other negro, examining some mysterious chalk marks on the sides, "come fum Albenny."

"Wharbouts is Albenny?" asked Uncle Remus, with a frown.

"Down de country," said the other, with a sweeping gesture that took in at least two points of the compass.

"She 's in de Nunited State er Georgy," exclaimed Uncle Remus, "dat whar she is. Kaze my young marster had a plantation down dar."

"Dey tells me," said the other negro, "dat de wedder down dar starts in ter warmin' up terreckerly atter Christmus."

"Hit bleedz ter be so," said Uncle Remus, "bekaze it takes hot wedder an' a heap un it fer ter git de right kinder sweetness on de inside uv a watermillion. An' 't ain't only dat — 't ain't only de sun what gits it in dar. When

I come an' ax you fer to please be so good ez ter gimme a watermillion, don't you dast ter gimme no yuther kind 'cep'n de ginnywine kind what got de natal sweetness proned inter it fum de middle plum down ter de rine."

"I wish you 'd hush!" said the other negro, shutting his eyes tight and grinning.

"Hit des like I tell you," said Uncle Remus. "Some er doze yer yuther niggers, dey er runnin' 'roun' all over creation, gwine out ter Massasip' an' down de Alabam', but I boun' you I 'm a-gwine ter stay whar I kin git de ginnywine state er Georgy watermillion when de season come 'roun'."

"I 'clar' ter gracious, Brer Remus, you make me feel right quare."

"I don't wanter be whar I 'll hatter buy um, needer," said Uncle Remus, paying no attention to the other negro's remark. "I wanter be whar I kin go 'long de road soon in de mornin' an' make like I 'm huntin' a cow what strayed off. Den, atter I been gwine 'long de road so long a time, maybe I 'll take a notion fer to take a nigh cut, an' den I 'll clime de fence an' santer 'long thoo de fiel's, an' keep on twel bimeby I 'll come 'long ter whar de crab-grass sorter growin' rank. I

won't min' de dew, kaze what does a little dew 'mount ter, mo' speshually when a man is gwine 'long huntin' a stray cow?"

The other negro stood listening to Uncle Remus with open mouth.

"I 'll go 'long twel I come ter de rank crab-grass, an' den I 'll 'low ter myse'f, 'Hey! what all dish yere grass doin' here? Look like somebody done plant sump'n' here an' den gone off an' lef' um. Den bimeby I 'll see sump'n' n'er in de grass dat look roun' an' green an' slick, wid little draps er dew on it des like glass beads. Den I 'll stop an' hol' up my han's an' say, 'Whoever is see de beat er dat? Man come 'long an' plant big watermillion patch, an' den go off an' lef' um.' Den I 'll sorter poke roun' in de grass wid my cane twel I come 'cross a great big million wid streaks on 'im like rattlesnake, an' den I 'll thump 'er an' ef she holler back at me like she full, I 'll set down right flat er de groun' and bus' 'er wid my fist."

The listening negro moved a little nearer.

"Yasser," continued Uncle Remus, "dat des what I'd do. I would n't be grievin' kaze I ain't got no comp'ny, but ef dey wuz anybody settin' off in de grass watchin' me, dey 'd see a sight, man.

"Dey 'd see me run my han' down inter de meat des like a scoop, an' fetch myse'f a swipe 'cross de face, an' den dey 'd hear me smack my mouf like a wagon-driver poppin' a whip.

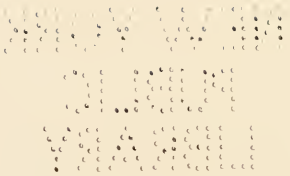
"Yasser! dey 'd see all dat, an' de mo' dey 'd see er my motions de less dey 'd see er de watermillion. I 'd fergit all 'bout de cow, an' den I 'd make my way back home an' set in de sun an' nod. I 'd nod ef de bummel-eye bee did n't git me, kaze I 'd have mo' sweetness en me fum de juice er de watermillion dan one er deze yer sugar hogsheads what sets out in front er de country stores.

"Yasser! an' ef I wuz ter eat two watermillions an' git bilious, I 'd shuffle up town an' git me" —

Here Uncle Remus made a few marks in the sand with his cane in a reflective way.

"I 'd git me a thrip's wuff er dram en den go hunt me anudder cow some'rs."

"Brer Remus," said the other negro, "des wait right whar you is. I 'm gwine ter git a watermillion. I des bleedz ter have it."

"Go 'long, den, honey," said Uncle Remus. "When you talk dat away, I ain't got time ter be in a hurry."

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